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ABSTRACT

This document provides reports of projects related to Internet use by adult learners and practitioners. Chapter 1 reports findings of an online survey of 113 adult literacy practitioners actively using the Internet, including difficulties encountered in learning to use the Internet; training or supports that helped; Internet features used by priority; and how the Internet was used for adult education activities. Chapter 2 presents similar findings from a companion research project that used focus groups with 40 practitioners that explored the following topics: motivation for nonusers to use the Internet; new and experienced users' motivation; difficulties encountered; training or supports that helped; and Internet resources/features/sites practitioners felt were useful. Chapter 3 is a summary of results of from focus groups with 21 learners examining how adult literacy/basic education/English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) students in Northern and Southern California and Southern Ohio use the Internet. Findings are grouped as follows: where students get access; why students without access want it; why student Internet users go online; difficulties students encounter; training or supports that help; and Internet resources/sites/features students would like to find. Chapter 4 is a staff development model designed to help adult literacy/basic education/ESOL practitioners with little or no experience using the Internet or computers. Chapter 5 lists literacy World Wide Web directories and search tools. Chapter 6 is a collection of 53 Website reviews. Chapter 7 lists professional purposes for using the Internet identified by focus group participants. (YLB)

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National Institute for Literacy

Literacy Leader Fellowship Program Reports

Volume II
Number 2

Driver Education for the Information Superhighway

David Rosen
Literacy Leader Fellow 1995-96

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Driver Education for the Information Superhighway

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February 1998

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It is available on-line at http://www2.wgbh.org/mbcweis/ltc/alri/alri.html/#Publications

The views expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the National Institute for Literacy.

Dedication

This study is dedicated to Sally Waldron and John Comings with thanks for their encouragement.

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Many people at the National Institute for Literacy, in California and in Ohio gave generously of their time, and I am deeply indebted to them. I especially want to acknowledge the enormous help of Alice Johnson, Meg Young, Susan Gaer, Marjorie Knowles, Jean Stephens and Judith Scherrer.

About the author

David Rosen is the Director of Boston's Adult Literacy Resource Institute, a staff and program development center jointly sponsored by the University of Massachusetts at Boston and Roxbury Community College. The Resource Institute, with a staff of seven, serves over 130, primarily community-based adult literacy/basic education/ESOL programs in the greater Boston area. The Resource Institute provides staff development and training, program and curriculum development, and other technical assistance, training, consulting and materials resources to help adult education program staff members continuously improve their teaching and the quality of their programs. His additional professional activities include consulting with Literacy Partners of New York City, to help establish a new three-year national "What Works Literacy Partnership" funded by the Lila Wallace Readers' Digest Foundation; providing nonformal (adult) education consulting and technical assistance services to the Philippines Department of Education through a grant provided to World Education by the Asian Development Bank; and consulting with Public Television Station WGBH on an advisory committee to assist in developing a new national 26-part ESOL television broadcast series. David was named a Literacy Leader Fellow, 1995-1996, by the National Institute for Literacy. He also moderates the National Literacy Advocates listserv, which is an excellent place to learn about literacy policy, practice, and research issues.

How Adult Learners and Practitioners Use the Internet

Table of Contents

1. How Easy is it for Adult Educators to Use the Information Superhighway? 1
2. How Adult Literacy Practitioners are Using the Internet 13
3. How Adult Learners Are Using the Internet 31
4. The Internet for Beginners: A Staff Development Model for Adult Education Practitioners 39
5. The Literacy List 45
6. Webliography 55
   - Student and Teacher Resources 56
   - ESOL (ESL) 70
   - Adult Secondary Education (GED/EDP) 79
   - Project-based Learning 79
   - Adult Education Research 82
   - Grants Information 83
   - Other Interesting Sites 84
7. Professional Purposes for Using the Internet 87

How Easy is it for Adult Educators to Use the Information Superhighway?

Are they cruising? Or are they stalled, or in the shop? How are they using the Internet? What difficulties do they find and what helps them to overcome them?

February 26, 1996

As part of a research fellowship from the National Institute for Literacy, I recently conducted an on-line survey of 113 adult literacy practitioners (including a handful of international participants from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the U.K.) who are actively using the internet; one clear finding is that Internet surfing isn't always sunny. Below are some of the challenges which many practitioners have faced, and what seems to have helped to overcome them; but first here's some background on the survey and the respondents.

I conducted the survey in November, 1995, using a questionnaire posted to as many of the adult literacy/basic skills/ESOL-oriented electronic lists (listservs) as I could find (NLA, NIFL-Workplace, NIFL-ESL, NIFL-ALLD, TESLIT-L, NUMERACY, LITERACY, LEARNER, and NWAC, among others.) It is impossible to know how many people saw the questionnaire, especially because it was forwarded to other lists and individuals; however, the response rate was larger than I anticipated. The respondents were at varying levels of competence and as a group had a wide range of years and kinds of experience in using the Internet; but as they have all found their way to at least one electronic list, we can assume that they are all actually using the Internet and have some level of competence.

Survey Information

Like the adult literacy field, but in contrast to popular stereotypes of Internet users, a great majority of the respondents were female, and between the ages of 36 and 55. 37% were administrators, and 22% were teachers. The remaining respondents were: researchers, consultants, staff and curriculum developers, graduate students, librarians, VISTA volunteers, and others who work in the field of adult literacy/basic education/ESOL. 60% logged on to the Internet primarily from work, 37% logged on from home, and many logged on from both places. 54% of the respondents logged on from a large, medium or small urban area; another 25% from a suburban area; and 17% from a rural area. (See appended tables 1 - 6, on page 11.)

Difficulties Encountered in Learning to Use the Internet

The following were difficulties respondents encountered.

- **Purchasing hardware or software**

22% of the respondents found the cost of hardware or software a problem. 7% also had problems in purchasing hardware or software.

- **Learning to use the hardware and software**

18% said they had problems in learning to use the hardware, and 44% said they had problems learning to use the software.

- **Getting access to a telephone line**

20% had difficulty getting access to a telephone line, but since only 22% of those who responded were teachers, this undoubtedly under-represents the problem for most teachers and tutors.

- **Getting an Internet account**

14% had difficulty getting an account and 13% had problems with the cost of an account. Again, this is likely to be a larger problem for practitioners in public schools, community-based organizations and other venues where Internet accounts are not routinely provided free.

- **Learning account commands, especially UNIX commands**

42% said that learning to use their system's Internet commands was a problem.

- **Difficulty accessing the Internet provider server**

37% reported having difficulty, once they had an account, in accessing their servers, including busy signals, slow service, getting bumped off once they logged on, and the cost of access calls.

- **Learning to use various Internet features**

Once one is up and running, and able to use one's Internet account, there are many Internet features to use; but each must be learned, and some are more difficult to use than others. Here are some of the features in order of frequency of difficulty for respondents to learn:

  - **uploading/downloading files**
    50% of the respondents had trouble learning this

  - **file transfer protocol (FTP)**
    42% had trouble with this and four commented, "What is this?" and "Haven't learned it yet"

  - **listservs (electronic lists)**
    36% had difficulty learning this and, although fewer people had problems with this than with ftp, they gave it higher priority.

  - **searching databases**
    32% had problems learning this

- **email**
  31% had problems learning how to do email

- **the World Wide Web**
  29% have had difficulty learning to use the World Wide Web

- **Gopher**
  28% have had problems learning how to use Gopher

- **finding good listservs, Web sites, Gophers, MOOs, etc.**
  Another problem, aside from the technical ones involved in learning to use the various Internet services, is finding good resources on the Internet for adult literacy. 32% said this was a problem for them, although it wasn't clear if they felt they were there to find. One person commented that the California-based Adult Education Server, OTAN, had good adult education resources already "bookmarked" through its pilot project.

- **finding the time required to learn the above**
  70% agreed, however, that the biggest problem was finding the time at work or at home to learn all this.

Selected Comments From Respondents

Many answering the questionnaire took the time to provide comments. Below is a range of comments which point to some other problems or illuminate the ones already mentioned.

> "The most difficult thing was trying to find information about how to connect and get started. When I first became interested, I could only find a couple of books about the Internet. It was not a problem to get the equipment, but getting it all connected and working was a challenge. (Simple, logistical stuff proved to be very complicated.) Also, the learning curve requires that you devote a lot of time and patience up front. If one doesn't make the commitment, it's easy to say 'I don't have the time.' "

> "I think the major difficulty for many people is configuring hardware, software and the Internet provider to make all the components "talk" to each other. Once you're up and running, all of the other stuff is manageable. It's a big exploration and with all the online assistance and plethora of books, it is quite workable. The major thing people need is curiosity and then a focus."

> "Mostly it was using the different pieces of software...required on the Internet. For example, you need Eudora for email, and Usenet software for Usenet, and Netscape, and FTP software, and Telnet software; and all these have to be configured to fit into the Web browser you are using."

"My time is so limited that I can barely keep a meager listserv going. I really need to be able to pick up a phone and talk to someone...when I have a question. Calling an unhelpful 'techie' who virtually sneers at me when I ask a painfully rudimentary question is of no help to me, and in fact scares me away from asking again. My situation is probably not unlike others who are paid to do certain things but not to take the time to really master this useful technology. It's not in our 'job descriptions,' so it keeps getting pushed to the side."

"[I am] unable to convince my employer that an Internet account with lists & e-mail is necessary -- so I do netting at home, on my own time! With my own equipment!"

"Access to [a] telephone [is the] biggest problem at [the] worksite now."

"[The] #1 difficulty in relation to job/literacy applications: despite repeated requests and a mandate from the Assistant Head Administrator, I've been unable to get authority to access from the school or from home using the school account....Even with that access, I wouldn't have the ability to do more than email. Progress has been promised, but I still may not be included since I'm part-time (although I'm the only person on the adult literacy staff who's had any experience and/or training -- which they paid for)."

"It isn't nice to look a gift horse in the mouth, and I have a free account through my nonprofit job status, but...the hours of my use are restricted to daytime only so the students at the University can use the Net to study in the evening. As my free time tends to also be in the evening, this is a conflict that fits into the #1 priority problem, time. Also, 'PINE,' my e-mail word processing program, is cumbersome and erratic, and it ties up my phone line as we really can't afford a second line. The age of my computer and equipment is also an issue....as money is always a problem!!!"

"Downtime and lack of accessibility at times when it was needed to use with a class."

"Instead of just trying 'hit or miss,' I should have taken a practical, hands-on, visual course. Now one is being offered in our public library."

"[We need] female trainers who are not going to make me feel like an idiot. Also [there is] a barrier in the metaphors -- 'surfing' & 'superhighway' rather than a 'patchwork quilt' and 'bazaar' which are much more like what it seems like for me out there...but these are less Macho, less Californian metaphors. The guys in the information technology centre of our institute are of variable degrees of sexism -- we have 30% women in our Internet users group & they think this is **fantastic** -- well, it is compared to International figures."

"I remember almost giving up on the whole thing because Unix was so complicated."

"My first use of the Internet was through the University of Southern Maine's hookup at my house. Because I was going to classes there, I was able to use the University system. Although I experienced lots of difficulty initially using the hard- and software, with some practice I was doing ERIC searches easily and with satisfaction. Now that I've moved to Arizona -- and am not in classes until January, and so not yet hooked up to a University system, I use my America On Line to try and do ERIC searches. I've spent so much time attempting to get good information and getting nothing that I've basically given up AOL accessing WWW. I have hooked up to a freenet here in Arizona and am experiencing just as much difficulty. Although I seem to get further with my ERIC searches, actually seeing references on the screen, I have trouble limiting the searches to the specifics I need. Also, printing is a problem; I have to save them to another software, then print them out later. [I] can't seem to print right from the on-screen reference. I've tried the help line. Everyone is very helpful, but the time consumed tracking down help makes the whole thing crazy."

"Your survey arrived just when I was deciding that I am the only person in the world who needs to use this purportedly great database accessibility and can't figure the darn thing out."

"Understanding documentation."

"No real guidance in how to use all the features, fear of getting lost or wasting a lot of work time in learning how to use the features."

"Initially I found it very difficult to adjust to the volume of information coming at me every day. I felt I had to read all my listserv messages, didn't know how to get listserv messages under a different screen name than my personal mail, couldn't orient myself to chat language, etc."

Training or supports which helped in overcoming these difficulties

Below are the kinds of support and training which respondents found helpful. Following each one is the percentage of respondents who identified this as helpful to them. Of course, this is also influenced by what support and training were actually available.

- hands-on experience (trial and error): 88%
- a friend or colleague who you could ask for help: 65%
- manuals, guides, or other printed instruction or "how-to's": 50%
- training workshop(s) : 40%
- technical assistance by telephone : 27%

- colleagues who were struggling to learn the Internet together to whom you could go for support: 25%
- on-line technical assistance by email or message forum: 24%
- on-line technical assistance in real time: 14%
- a "techno-buddy" assigned to help by telephone or in-person: 11%
- course(s) : 7%

Selected Respondents' Comments

"Most of the manuals I've seen weren't focused on my particular needs. I need access to quick, plain-English help from a knowledgeable person sympathetic to the needs of people like me -- busy with particular needs, with little background in the technicalities of this stuff."

"What helped the most was being given an account with unlimited access for a limited amount of months. With no fear of incurring unexpected expense and the ability to really explore, the rest was no longer a stumbling block."

"What helped me learn the most was an online course, the famous *Internet Road Map.* I learned far more through this course than any other training or workshop I have had before or since. (This course is still available on Gopher.)"

[Several respondents mentioned that *ROADMAP* was helpful.]

"Florida teachers have free Internet access -- at school and at home. Without the FIRN resource I never would have used or been able to afford the Internet."

"Tutorial help (one-on-one) at least one hour weekly"

"Some combination of:

-- A special interest group of people with similar needs and knowledge level.
-- A good facilitator or two who can serve as a resource person.
-- Either an in-person meeting or on-line chats for the above group and facilitator, backed by occasional phone help. This in many ways follows the inquiry-based staff development model which SABES [the Massachusetts System for Adult Basic Education Support] and others use. In this case, the staff development need is learning how to use the Internet in one's work. This kind of system might be put into the staff development systems of existing state and national and local literacy organizations. Of course, someone has to pay for this,

maybe via a combination of fees, paid by participants, and grants. Also, in addition to developing one's expertise, practitioners are also blocked by the cost (money and time) of purchasing the right equipment. Maybe some of these computer companies could help by giving folks a break on the cost."

"A guide put out by a literacy organization saying: 'Check this out for funding; check this out for program support; for.....; a how-to for literacy ideas."

"Other practitioners learning at the same time with me, and having the time (i.e. recognized as a valid use of my time) to wander around and get comfortable with what I have learned. Right now I only learn when I have to, i.e. when I'm asked to do something and it's new and at that point it's almost crisis management. But just spending time wandering is not a priority use of my time."

"I'm lucky in that I work at a University; therefore, software is not that difficult and neither is access. The University also provides free workshops and phone assistance. Plus we have a "techie" in the office who will help with technical problems. So, I don't have to be that technically astute. I seem to learn best by trial and error with someone I can call on when I get stuck. [The] biggest problem is time, time, time! Experience in projects that have taught others to use technology (not just Internet but basic operations) suggests having a technical person available for assistance, hands-on practice with feedback during training, a series of trainings rather than just one intro, and a perceived or actual need to learn. (I didn't learn to use email, WWW, etc. until I had to; then I made the time to do it.)

"The unlimited access account to get started, someone known (and friendly) to converse with across the net, a few leads and tips on how to find things on the Web and in Gopherspace, some time to play around (I just make time but I know a bunch of folks who will not), [and] a lot of natural curiosity. It was tremendously exciting, too, to find listservs that helped me professionally."

"An opportunity to have a smaller peer group to work and do the browsing with and to share good experiences, problems, etc. with"

"Easily accessed help features that really explained what to do, or hard copy manuals."

"Having a 'techno buddy' assigned to me because I learn best by show and do"

"I learned the way I needed to, although I think that more tech manuals written in 'real people's language' would have been wonderful."

[Several respondents suggested the need for manuals in plain English]

"A learning buddy. Someone who knows a little bit more than I do."

"A workshop designed specifically for literacy providers"

Having a technical support person who was readily available to help, explain things, answer questions, demonstrate procedures, etc."

"The OTAN pilot project [in California] was terrific. It provided a very simple explanation to a complex tool, gave hands on experience, and any follow-up phone or online help I needed. It was definitely a coup. Without it the possible use of online services was intimidating, confusing and seemingly expensive. That free 6-month period gave me the grace time to practice, explore and feel like I can now pay for service because 1) I know how to use it, 2) I know how valuable it is."

"If I had been working with others and not out of my home computer, it would have been easier to overcome the problems I first encountered. When I worked for two months in a setting with others who are completely computer smart, it made things very easy and I was able to learn some very helpful shortcuts."

How Respondents Are Using the Internet

Internet features used (for any purpose) by priority

The overwhelming majority of respondents use the Internet for e-mail and listservs. (The high percentage of listserv users is easily explained by the fact that all respondents were identified through the use of listservs. One could not generalize this finding to the general population of adult literacy/basic education/ESOL practitioners on the Internet.)

- Email: 98%
- Electronic lists: 92%
- World Wide Web: 78%
- Gopher: 58%
- Uploading/downloading files: 55%
- Newsgroups: 34%
- File transfer protocol: 27%

Other(s) which were mentioned by at least one respondent:

- Searching databases (e.g. library or ERIC searches)

- Research
- Chats
- Telnet
- Online book groups
- Discussion groups
- Creating homepages
- Connection to America Online
- MUDS [MOOs] such as SchMOOze University

How the Internet is Used for Adult Education Activities

• Email exchanges with colleagues	94%
• Using listservs or message forums/newsgroups to get and share information about practice or policy:	92%
• Searching databases for information:	69%
• Research, e.g. by searching databases or on-line documents:	64%
• Work on projects with colleagues, such as writing articles or proposals or planning meetings or conferences:	52%
• Reading on-line magazines or journals:	50%
• Reviewing teacher-made curricula or lesson plans:	27%
• Helping students do electronic pen-pal-ing, or join message forums:	20%
• Looking for paid or volunteer work opportunities:	19%
• Searching on-line news databases (e.g. UP, AP, Reuters, etc.) for adult education-related information:	32%

Others mentioned:

"up- and downloading files between my regional SLRC [State Literacy Resource Center] and the central, one in Sacramento."

"We are a coalition of literacy organizations beginning a big project to get all member organizations (30 of them) online -- to learn, to improve services, to save resources, and hopefully to get students online. The coalition office is heading [up] this project."

"Searching for grant and other funding resources, for example the Federal Register."

"Will be using the Net for teacher-made curricula and homepages in the Spring of '96."

"Examining my practice in terms of social and political prejudices, identifying with other practitioners who face similar problems, exploring philosophy of teaching, thinking about why students are so scared and how current educational practices in K to12 aren't eliminating the fear factor in terms of math."

"Teaching - using the Internet as a tool for teaching mass media, new technology, finding information, research, etc."

"Use downloaded educational software in the computer lab. Use downloaded utilities and system upgrades to maintain lab."

TABLES

Table1. Gender

Female:	89 (79%)
Male:	24 (21%)

Table 2. Age

18-25:	4 (4%)
26-35:	17 (15%)
36-45:	35 (31%)
46-55:	48 (42%)
56 or older:	6 (5%)
Not Listed:	3 (3%)

Table 3. Primary work

Teaching:	25 (22%)
Administration:	42 (37%)
Staff Development:	10 (9%)
Research:	12 (11%)
Other:	24 (21%)

(2) VISTA Volunteers
State Literacy and Adult Education Resource Center Director Academic Advisor/Program Advocate
ABE Counselor, Level I
(3) Librarians
University Professor
Curriculum and Technology Coordinator
Curriculum Developer
Literacy Task Analysis and Assessment Developer
Policy Analyist
(5) Graduate Students
Consultant
Resource Teacher
(4) not listed

Table 4. Where Respondents Usually Log on to the Internet from

Work:	60%
Home:	37%
Not Listed:	3%

Table 5. Where Logon Site is Located

An urban area:	54%
A suburban area:	25%
A rural area:	17%
Not Listed:	4%

Table 6. Years on the Internet

Up to 6 months:	14%
Up to one year:	29%
Up to two years:	34%
More than two years:	23%

How Adult Literacy Practitioners are Using the Internet

September 12, 1996

> "To use the Internet is to enter a 'techno culture,' and for some this means culture shock. There are parallels with language learning. One has to take risks, to feel okay about feeling stupid. But the Internet doesn't have a system the way a language does -- and the organization it does have changes all the time."
>
> "I am teaching VESL (Vocational English for Speakers of other Languages) and I am trying to tell my students when you get out in the workplace you can't just go ask people things. You've got to figure it out. I'm trying to get them to read manuals and troubleshoot...don't be afraid to press a key. And that's really been hard for my students and for me, too, to get over that fear. We have to push self sufficiency. When you're in the workplace you just can't go bothering people all the time. You've got to figure it out for yourself."
>
> "We should think of the Net as an 'open entry' adult learning class."
>
> "It's a Sorcerer's Apprentice -- it's important to know when to pull the plug."
>
> (From three practitioners in the focus groups)

This is a summary of the results of a study I conducted in the Winter and Spring of 1996. The study was made possible by a fellowship from the National Institute for Literacy. The results provide a snapshot of how a small sample of adult basic education teachers, including teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), from Northern and Southern California, and from Southern Ohio, are using the Internet: it details their Internet frustrations, satisfactions, and hopes; the obstacles they have faced; and the supports which have helped them to overcome these obstacles.

This summary is organized as follows: Description of the Focus Groups; Findings; Conclusions; and Recommendations

This research is preliminary, not comprehensive, and not generalizable to the whole population of adult basic education/ESOL practitioners. It is a companion piece to "How Easy is it for Adult Educators to use the Information Superhighway?", the results of an online survey I conducted of adult basic education practitioners in November, 1995. The two studies, one based on responses to questionnaires, and the other based on focus groups, have similar findings. I believe we should look at them as early evidence of what lies ahead for many more practitioners. I hope this will interest teachers who are using the Internet now, and those who plan to get online; and I also hope this will be used by those who plan and carry out technology staff development for adult basic education/ESOL practitioners.

Description of the Focus Groups

Four practitioner focus groups were held in California from February 12th-15th,1996. Two were held in Southern California, the first at the Beverly Hills Public Library and the second at Rancho Santiago Community College in Santa Ana; and two were held in Northern California, at Mission College in Santa Clara. On April 24th, another practitioner focus group was held in Southern Ohio, at the Hamilton ABLE program. There were a total of 40 participants across the four focus groups; most were paid a stipend to attend, and the focus groups lasted approximately two hours. All followed the same group interview protocol.

The Rancho Santiago College group and the two Mission College groups were similar in makeup, primarily ESOL teachers: All seven of the Rancho Santiago College group were teachers, three from the ABC Adult School, three from San Diego Community College, and one from the El Camino College Workplace Learning Resource Center; the first Mission College group consisted of five teachers and a program developer from Mission College, and a project supervisor from a different community college; the second Mission College group had seven ESOL and basic skills teachers, one of whom was also a program coordinator. The participants in this group were from a community-based program, from a public school adult education program, and from Mission College.

The Beverly Hills Library group had no classroom teachers. It was a mix of a volunteer tutor, five literacy/education organization administrators, and two librarians. Several people fit several categories as former librarians, writers, tutors, and teachers. At least one librarian was also an administrator. All, however, regarded themselves as involved with literacy as educators or practitioners.

At the Hamilton, Ohio ABLE program, there were 11 participants: nine teachers and two coordinators. They worked at ABE programs in Southern Ohio: Talawanda City ABLE, Hamilton ABLE, Queen City Vocational Center (Cincinnati), Great Oaks I.T.C.D, and Columbus City Schools ABLE.

Findings

Percentage of these Practitioners using the Internet

14 of the 40 practitioners (35%) described themselves as "regular" or "experienced" Internet users; 17 (43%) said they were new users; 5 (12%) said they wanted to use the Internet but hadn't yet; and 4 (10%) said they were unsure about this, that they had mixed feelings.

Motivation for "Wannabees" to Use the Internet

Individual focus group participants who hadn't used the Internet described their general (personal) purposes and their professional purposes for using the Internet as follows:

a) general purposes

- One participant said she felt "The world is going this way, and so is my family.
- "Another said, "It will soon be as common a tool as the telephone, a fact of life."
- Another said "It's a challenge" we should accept.

- Another felt that getting information is attractive.
- One participant said he was skeptical about whether the Internet will improve our quality of life (and the quality of students' lives, and classes)
- One participant said she wants to know what the Internet is, what's going on. She sees URL's on T.V., and writes them down. She also said she's interested in getting health information.

b) Professional purposes

- One participant said he is a free-lance writer, and needs to network with other writers to access information, and to communicate with his colleagues.
- Another wanted to share ideas with other adult education teachers.
- Another wanted to help students communicate with others around the country, and the world.
- One participant said that because it will be a common tool, students need to know how to use it.

New and experienced users' Motivation

The categories below -- in this, and in the subsequent sections -- are mine, and the specific examples could often fit more than one category, but I thought it might be useful to try to group some of the purposes which practitioners have for using the Internet. The categories are not in order of importance.

a) General Purposes

1) Family (parent and children) uses

   - Going online to the (San Francisco) Exploratorium (There's a Web list on that site called "Andrea's School List....Parents are getting hooked on the mini-lessons.")
   - Children using the Internet for research

2) Research, searching databases, using search engines to find a variety of kinds of information, such as:

   - Weather
   - Travel information
   - Labor law
   - Using online library catalogs

- Research on a personal legal case
- Joining electronic lists to get information

3) Shopping

- Airline reservations
- Shopping for a car in "classifieds 2,000," a "cool" site
- Investment information

4) Entertainment

- Meeting people and chatting using "IRC," "MOOS," "MUSHES," and "MUSES."
- Finding humor sites on the Internet
- Virtually touring cities around the world
- Looking for pornography

5) Hobbies

- Getting geneology information
- Investment information (stocks)
- History

6) Communication

- Email -- "fun, useful (any time of night or day) to write to friends and family in distant places"
- Email -- "to communicate with partner who travels"
- Email -- "It's my answering machine"
- File-swapping

7) Employment -- Looking for jobs online

b) Professional Purposes

1) Online instruction/learning/skills improvement

- Students using the Internet for distance learning. One participant -- an experienced user -- offers an ESOL class by email at Spectrum Virtual University and has 174 students from around the world.

- Another participant teaches a reading class using email and has eleven Mission College students.
- Students using the Internet for reading and writing skills improvement through email and real-time chats
- Matching students with "Keypals" to help them improve reading and writing skills. ESOL Students using "Aspects", an internal "chat" program at Mission College
- Project-based learning (penpals, Internet projects, publishing) "hoping to put this in the classroom"
- Creating multimedia programs and putting them up on a server
- Math teaching applications
- Using the Web with ESOL students (E-zines, newspapers, on line cultural sites such as Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian, etc.)

2) A source for classroom ideas and materials

3) Communication with colleagues through email and electronic lists

- "Email within my department, then college-wide, now with colleagues on the Internet"
- Being able to reach other teachers (if they regularly read their email -- through asynchronous communication -- to share important recent information about students who they both teach)
- "To connect with my school while I am on sabbatical"
- California TESOL's Legislative Network listserv
- To enable project directors to stay in touch with each other
- TESL electronic lists -- for collegial sharing
- OTAN -- information from the state D.O.E. by email
- To stay in touch with other Ohio adult educators (through the Ohio Literacy List)
- Trading information with other (math) teachers around the country

4) Research/getting information

- Downloading Reuters' news summary from AOL
- Staying up on national public policy (using the NLA electronic list) and distributing this information to other teachers, supervisors

5) Professional development

- Taking a class through a BBS (one teacher has done this)
- Informal training
- Exchanging lesson modules -- on America Online in the education section

6) Marketing, and disseminating information

- Marketing what we do through the Internet
- "Getting familiar with the Internet so I can 'talk the talk' when I go out to market the College to companies"
- Publishing (e.g. Literacy Network of Greater L.A. has Internet publications: articles by Chip Carlin, LVNY Magazine)

7) Other purposes

- Introducing students to the Internet ("We owe it to our students to teach them this. We have to pay attention to it. It's everywhere.")
- Reference (This comment was made by a reference librarian.)
- Training librarians to use the new technology. ("Training is a huge issue.")
- Searching for information on grants ("Using 'YAHOO,' I keyword search for "literacy" and "grants")
- Using the Internet is a way to help students (and help oneself, as a teacher) to knock down barriers to learning

Difficulties Encountered

1) Costs

- Cost of hardware, software, Internet service provider, training
- Feeling that the "meter is running," that one cannot afford the time to play, to learn

2) Time -- the Internet requires a big investment of time to learn and to use.

3) Hardware and Software problems

- Hardware that doesn't work together
- Not having enough memory to do what you want
- Modem problems (slow, not connecting)

- Getting software configured right (TCP, TCP/IP. etc.)
- "Appletalk active/inactive " error message
- Software/hardware incompatibilities resulting in crashes -- equipment failure (like a power lawn mower that runs for a minute then dies....), the "frozen hourglass" experience (referring to the hourglass icon on DOS/Windows platform PC)
- Having a primitive email system

4) Web sites which are not maintained well

- Addresses of good sites change

5) Connectivity problems

- Phone lines to the server which are often busy
- Sites which go down
- AOL slow, getting bumped off the server
- Using the Internet in class is risky; it's unpredictable
- Getting connected, waiting, getting cut off, waiting... the amount of time this all takes

6) Finding the information one needs

- Search time is a problem
- Internet indexing doesn't do a good job with "see also" -- cross-referencing needed. Net needs to be better organized
- Knowing how to use search engines, browsers
- "It's still hard to find an answer to a specific question."
- "Search engines produce...so much. It is hard to get a good summary. There are lots of mindless comments, but not a central core of good stuff. One has to plow through so much to get quality. It is still superficial, and doesn't have enough substance."
- "I don't know where to go once I'm on, what questions to ask. I understand the organization of libraries and bookstores, but not this."
- "When I search (using a search engine) I get 25 references back -- this is too much to go through in the15 minutes I have available."

7) Need for staff development

- Teachers need to learn how to do economical searches.

- Workshops have often been disastrous -- they go too fast, nothing is explained -- or they are too basic.
- Learning on one platform, then trying to use another. Being trained on one system, then using another with no transfer of learning. Instead, some people experience interference with learning

8) Access

- Teachers don't have access to the Internet, especially not in their classrooms.
- To use email, one has to have convenient access.
- Needing to have a computer at school and at home.
- "Some students have access, some don't. It's an impediment to curriculum development when some students don't have access. It creates divisions: haves and have nots."
- "With my current provider I am limited to one hour online at a time."

9) Security -- system security is an issue, for example for libraries

10) Offensive materials/censorship -- Access to inappropriate or offensive materials, and censorship are problems for libraries and schools.

11) Listserv difficulties

- Mistakenly sending a personal message to a list can be embarrassing.
- Readers replying to a forwardee instead of the original poster of a message
- "It was overwhelming when I first signed on to listservs and I didn't know how to get out!"

12) Internet Service Providers

- Choosing the right Internet provider where there are many to choose from
- Lack of collaboration of service providers -- electronic lists could help build collegial attitudes among service providers.

13) Terminology (especially for wannabees and new users)

- Getting mysterious messages like "login invalid" and not knowing what to do to solve the problem(s)
- "When you're on the Internet and run into difficulties, sometimes it is hard to know what the question is to ask the techie, the terms to use; and manuals are often not reader-friendly."

14) User feelings

- "I'm in the same place with my students -- frustrated, overwhelmed."
- Teachers and students' fear of using this technology
- Feeling that computers are invasive, not wanting one at home, for example
- How the technology affects us personally, lowering our self-esteem (by making us feel incompetent)
- Because there is so much to learn and things are happening so fast, feeling overpowered, overwhelmed, behind, feeling "how will I ever catch up?"
- Feeling intimidated
- "A true ESL experience" (I believe the participant meant that learning how to use the Internet is like learning a new language -- requiring risks, sometimes looking foolish, being frustrated when you need to get something done but don't have the words or tools.)

15) Administrative support

- Lack of administrative support for using the Internet. Some administrators don't understand that the hardware is only part of what's needed, that teachers also need training and support.

16) Reading online text -- the screen text is hard to read; the type is too small.

17) The "Black Box Effect" -- when there's a technical problem it's hard to know where it's happening -- your computer's software? Hardware? Local Area Network, Connection to server? Server? Netscape? Another Site's server?"

18) Technical Support

- The "right question" problem -- when something goes wrong and you need help from a "techie," it's hard -- if you're a novice -- to frame the question so the techie will understand.(Combined with the "Black Box Effect" this is very problematic.One participant commented that chat rooms in AOL are helpful with this)
- Disdainful technical support (and then feeling like it's an imposition to ask for help)
- "Learning all the pieces and how they go together in a shifting world.Every time you take a step, there are so many more steps to take. You ask for technical assistance and the person says "just use the file capture" and hangs up.But I don't know what "file capture" means.Sometimes the T.A. people assume you know things that you don't.I need a patient teacher who will understand where I am."
- Technical problems can be discouraging -- and it is difficult to find out who knows how to solve them.

- "We don't have a telephone near the computer, so when I need T.A. by telephone, I can't sit next to the screen with the phone in my hand and go step-by-step."

19) Documentation

- Manuals (some people like to use them, some don't)
- Being able to find the answer to a problem in a manual, especially when you can't accurately name the problem, and when the manual doesn't have a good index

20) Other

- Public users (in libraries) must have limits on sizes of files they download because of the time some files might take.
- How to access the World Wide Web
- Netscape has too many choices.
- Netscape doesn't direct one.
- It takes a lot of time to get to the sites you want.
- Sometimes Netscape won't open up.
- "Getting wrong information, e.g. from salespeople who don't know what they're talking about"
- "Getting too into this, getting sucked in, and then finding its not worth the time"
- Lack of experience

Training or Supports Which have Helped Practitioners Overcome These Difficulties

1) Having clear purposes for using the Internet

- Participants/trainees need to have a compelling reason to be on the Internet (take a course, get training, find specific information, look for funding sources, etc.)
- "In training, a participant should have to learn one thing they *need* to use back at work."
- "When there's a *real* reason to do something, then people learn what they need to do it."

2) Having a "Techno-buddy", a friend or family member who can help

- One-to-one mentoring
- Support from friends
- Online or telephone "tech buddy" or "tech guru"-- a sponsor or support person

3) Clear, easy-to-use directions and instructions

- "It would be helpful if there were 'Steps to Get Online' in print, in newsletters for example, with the steps in the fewest words possible which would explain what to do clearly, logically.
- A good teacher training manual
- The Netscape descriptions of search engines are helpful.
- Follow-up support should include manuals and online help menus (if they are developed well, which they often are not)
- "For some, manuals. (For example, many students will learn this way -- if they are charged up.) We need to work on getting people to use manuals, helping them to pick good ones (with good indexes), to get over 'manual phobia', to relate to books". A manual with good cross referencing, organized intuitively, separated by hardware type would be helpful.
- "Cheat sheets" that explain what to do
- *Netguide* is a helpful, readable monthly journal. It has interesting stories about possible ramifications of technology, pointers, tidbits.
- *The Internet Guide for Dummies* is easy to read, not technical.

4) Training

- Workshops
- Training in a real training room, an Internet lab
- Training which takes into account participants' goals, and which is leveled: beginner, intermediate, advanced. Training must be customized to the participants' needs. Training programs are usually either too elementary or too advanced
- Training should use a combination of presentation with an LCD or InFocus machine and hands-on in the lab.
- Having public domain training modules
- Training sessions are useful (but frustrating if you can't then use the same kind of equipment you learned on)

5) Daily practice

- An opportunity to use the Internet daily
- Hands-on practice continued after training is critical.
- Doing things routinely, regular practice. "I have to do something over and over until I get it."

6) Ongoing technical assistance

- A two-person support team -- one who is a person who has human relation skills, the other who is a "techie" -- or one person who has both sets of skills
- A cadre of technical consultants, perhaps out of the SLRC's, matched with a "techie"
- Having a designated group of users in the district, who are paid for providing support
- "Warm bodies who can use simple terminology. If you get a techie, forget it." "People who don't treat you as if you're stupid. " "A tech support person you can call who talks to you like a friend."
- A technical support person who comes to your house or work

7) Online help

- District online helpline
- Help bubbles, help menus
- Technician in online, real time chat rooms to give support (e.g. AOL and Compuserve do this)
- Chat rooms of technical questions which are then archived and key-word searchable
- "I have friends on the Net who help me, who will email answer my technical questions. I have developed an online support system for myself."

8) Administrative support

9) Time to learn

10) Combinations of the above, e.g. formal presentations plus mentoring

11) Other Ideas

- Training and support available when you need it
- "Having [a person like] Susan Gaer (an ESOL teacher in Southern California) to help, advocate, pester me to use this"
- Having a tech person in the lab for training and support or someone who gets back to you immediately
- CUE (computer user educator) meetings -- where there are presentations on technology
- Having lab models available which detail information that might persuade administrators, for example how much it costs to set up and operate a lab

- Inviting a "techie" teacher to lunch or giving her a book in compensation for her t.a. time
- Student internships to help with technology, using students who have tech skills
- Organizing the class to learn how to use technology and to teach each other (e.g. Susan Gaer does this.)
- Hands-on learning (co-operative learning)
- "It's helpful to have a schema to hang the information on."
- Standardization (of formats?)
- Some books make it clear.
- "The hardware and software has to be immediately accessible, one's own. We need high-end laptops to send home with teachers and students."
- "Computers anonymous" groups
- An email soap opera (Apparently at Mission College someone developed a soap opera to get people interested in using e-mail. Messages were delivered daily and people got "hooked" because they wanted to know what was happening next.")
- A central facility to send questions to
- "It is helpful to have experience using a computer first, then to learn how to use the Internet (e.g. word processing, saving files, etc.)"
- "I have been learning by looking over my colleague's shoulder."
- "Different people have different learning styles -- it is important to take that into account."

Internet Resources/Features/Sites Practitioners Thought Would be Useful for Students and themselves

The following are categories of sites that practitioners feel are, or would be, especially useful to them. (There are already some examples of all of these on the World Wide Web.)

1) Research Sites (e.g. National Center for Adult Literacy, NCAL)
2) Curriculum materials Sites (e.g. OTAN)
3) A database of information about computer software for adult learners (NCAL)
4) Actual interactive online lessons (OTAN)

Specific Internet Sites and Listservs which were Cited as Useful

- Portland, Oregon Marathon Site

- Apple computer's homepage
- Altavista, "a good search engine, with tools to limit the search terms"
- Bob Allison's homepage, "a useful resource if you want to make homepages"
- "Grassroots" Web Site
- Eisenhower National Clearinghouse (Math and Science) digital lessons, useful for GED students
- Frog dissection site
- Sea World - lesson plans
- Adult education listservs
    - ◊ DISTED (Distance Education listserv)
    - ◊ AEDNET (listserv)
    - ◊ NUMERACY (listserv)
    - ◊ "Beat Calc" a one time per week mailing from a student showing ways to beat the calculator

Categories of Sites and Features Cited as Useful

- Travel, e.g. KOBE, Japan
- Teaching, language teaching sites.
- Health/Disease networks/support groups
- Local newspaper's "customized comics" page
- Public library online catalog
- Telephone book database sites, searching for long lost friends or relatives, then writing them letters!
- Web searching on students' own interests (self-directed)
- Public domain resources: e.g. graphics which can be copied for free
- Whole documents on line
- Compression schemes
- Lists of legislators' phones, email

Sites Which Practitioners Would Like to Find on the Internet

- Databases of materials for students, by level
- A filter which could be tailored to search based on one's own interests ("a mind like mine to search for me")
- More whole articles on line

Other Comments on Resources/Sites/Features

- "It is important that Internet resources are adaptable to learners' styles: visual, tactile, auditory. Some people, for example, learn from manuals, some don't."
- It is important to have large type, bullets, direct access
- Web design: don't put a big graphic on the first page -- it takes too long to load.

Other Comments:

- "The Internet is a 24 hour library"
- It is important to title web pages so that when they are key-word searched the right ones come up.
- Closer collaboration is needed between literacy programs and libraries.
- The Internet is an exciting information tool but people turn off if it is too hard to use.
- "It's a Sorcerer's Apprentice -- it's important to know when to pull the plug."
- Libraries need to have Internet training rooms.
- I am worried that information which is now free on the Internet will cost in the future, limiting access.
- We need to know how to use the Internet because students graduating from high schools, coming to us, will know how to use it.
- We must remember that there are always new people coming onto the Net.We should keep sending out information for neophytes. We should think of the Net as an "open entry"adult learning class.

Conclusions

At least in some parts of the country there is an extraordinary increase in the use of the Internet by teachers, including adult literacy/basic education/ESOL teachers. From these focus groups several conclusions can be drawn about how the Internet is being used by these practitioners:

1) Whether to Go "the Way the World Is Going"

Adult education practitioners, like many other Americans, feel the pervasive and persuasive impact which the Internet explosion has had on our culture. As one participant said, "The world is going this way, and so is my family." Or as another said, "It will soon be as common a tool as the telephone, a fact of life." Some, however, said they feel left behind or intimidated by these changes. And at least a couple of people expressed skepticism that these changes cannot yet be shown to improve the quality of anyone's life.

2) Feelings about Using the Internet

One of the important findings, I think, is how many feelings teachers have about the Internet (and computer technology) in their lives. These feelings, both positive ones like enthusiasm and empowerment, and negative ones such as fear and frustration, affect Internet use. One participant said, "I'm in the same place with my students -- frustrated, overwhelmed." Some others felt that computers are "invasive," "overpowering," "overwhelming," and that they "lower our self-esteem." Most of the participants, however were enthusiastic, if sometimes frustrated users.

3) Purposes for Using the Internet

These practitioners want to use the Internet for a wide range of personal and professional purposes. Many who are teachers feel that they owe it to their students to prepare them to use the Internet -- and computers in general -- as tools for survival and success in our society. They use the Internet at home with their children; to communicate with family and friends around the world; for shopping; for entertainment and hobbies; to look for jobs; and to get a variety of information. At work they use the Internet for online instruction; as a source of classroom ideas and materials; to communicate with colleagues (through email and electronic lists); to do research or get information; for professional development (through on-line classes or email); to market their programs; and to publish/disseminate information and student writings.

4) Problems with Using the Internet

Practitioners experience a huge range of (sometimes overwhelming) problems in using the Internet: lack of administrator support for their using the Internet; lack of easy, regular access; the costs of hardware, software, and an Internet Service Provider; lack of training and staff development for using technology; the huge amount of time it takes to learn and use the Internet; software and hardware problems; connectivity problems; problems searching for information; inadequate or nonexistent technical support; the terminology; changing web page addresses and poor web page maintenance; equipment and data security; access to offensive materials/censorship; difficulties using listservs; and difficulty with reading on-screen.

Two problems articulated by focus group participants, I think, deserve special attention: the "Black Box Effect" and "The Right Question."

The "Black Box Effect"

"When there's a technical problem it's hard to know where it's happening -- your computer's software? Hardware? Local Area Network, Connection to server? Server? Netscape? Another Site's server?"

The "right question" problem

> "When something goes wrong and you need help from a 'techie,' it's hard -- if you're a novice -- to frame the question so the 'techie' will understand."

Many participants -- and technical assistance providers I have talked with, too -- agreed that the "Black Box Effect" is getting to be a big problem. Combined with "the right question" problem, some new users are easily defeated as they try to use the Internet.

5) Training or Supports which Help in Overcoming these Problems

> Several teachers pointed out that there are different learning styles which need to be addressed. Some people use manuals; some don't. Some like ongoing help; others, only when they have tried unsuccessfully to solve a problem themselves. Those whose work is to support and encourage practitioners to use the Internet, however, might benefit from seeing the major categories of help which emerged: support from administrators; practitioners having real, clear, and compelling needs and purposes for using the Internet; Internet training; time to learn, and time for daily practice; having clear, easy-to-use directions and documentation; having a "techno-buddy;" getting ongoing technical assistance (after training); and combinations of most or all of the above.
>
> One staff support innovation that apparently has helped practitioners is an email soap opera which someone developed at Mission College to get people interested in using email. Messages were delivered daily and people got "hooked" because they wanted to know what was happening next.

6) Internet Resources Which Would be Useful

> Participants cited many specific Internet resources which they have found useful, and these are identified in the body of this document. Categories of useful sites included: curriculum materials for students (in databases, by level); interactive, on-line lessons; research; databases of information on computer software for adult learners; electronic lists; and filters which could tailor searches based on the user's interests (" a mind like mine to search for me").

Also noteworthy, particularly because the National Institute for Literacy -- through its Regional LINCS centers -- has begun to do this, practitioners said they want more whole documents offline.

Recommendations

1) Access and Support for Practitioners

> This study provides clear evidence that adult basic education/ESOL practitioners are using the Internet, but it also suggests that there are many daunting problems before use is widespread and regular in adult education programs and classrooms. The challenge of two years ago -- persuading teachers and other practitioners to try the Internet -- has changed to trying to provide the access and support to make this a possible, positive, useful experience. Unfortunately, the resources have not risen to meet this challenge. Above all other recommendations is this: we need a massive investment of public dollars to provide access, training and support for adult literacy practitioners to use computers and the Internet. The lack of this support was clear in every focus group -- and these were, by and large, the people who have received the most support! In addition, administrators need to understand the

importance of having the Internet in the classroom, with adequate support for teachers to use it.

2) Support Models

Much more attention needs to be paid to technology (and Internet) support models. Teachers need initial training, paid time for hands-on practice, ongoing technical support by telephone or in person, and regular and easy access to computers so they can learn, practice, and use these tools. A workshop -- or even a day of training-- is not enough. Technical assistance without initial training in not enough. Training and technical assistance without time -- and equipment -- to practice is not enough. All these elements of a support structure must be in place.

3) Good Content

Teachers -- and other practitioners who go on the Internet -- want to find good content: curriculum materials, lesson plans, articles; interactive online instruction or activities for learners; while there is some, it is woefully inadequate. I recommend new resources to support talented teacher/curriculum developers to develop useful new content to put up on the World Wide Web.

4) Links to the World of Work

In several focus groups, practitioners mentioned how important it is that students have computer skills to be employable. These include not just keyboarding and wordprocessing, but also using email, and skills in electronic information searching. With an increased emphasis in our society on employment and employability, public resources must be devoted to job readiness for an electronic world.

5) Internet Access for Students

Lack of access to the Internet for low-income students is a major problem. Public resources must be devoted to increasing access through adult literacy/basic education programs, libraries, and community computing centers. Private sector resources should be devoted to making Internet access available to all in the workplace.

6) A Medium for Professional Development

State Literacy Resource Centers and other adult literacy/basic education/ESOL providers of staff development should help teachers to use the Internet for professional development: to take online courses; to use listservs and forums for collegial learning and sharing; and to do project-based learning such as teacher inquiry. For example, on-line, point-to-point teleconferencing, with a reflector dish, now allows up to eight people to be on-screen, from their computer at no cost other than the connectivity and relatively inexpensive hardware and software. This should be explored as a medium for online real-time staff development courses.

7) The Internet Evokes Strong Feelings

This is a technology about which people feel strongly; strongly positive and negative, and for some people, both. It evokes feelings of joy, power, resourcefulness, and sometimes amazement. It also evokes fear, frustration, confusion, powerlessness, and disgust. If we wish to see the Internet used more widely, and better, in adult literacy education, we need to pay attention to these feelings.

How Adult Learners Are Using the Internet

September, 1996

This is a summary of the results of a study I conducted in the Winter and Spring of 1996 enabled by a Literacy Leader Fellowship from the National Institute for Literacy. It is a snapshot in time of how a small selection of adult literacy/basic education/ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) students in Northern and Southern California and in Southern Ohio are using the Internet: their hopes, satisfactions, and frustrations. This is early research, not comprehensive, and not generalizable to the population of adult basic education (including ESOL) students as a whole. Because the use of computers in adult basic education is expanding so rapidly, as is the use of the Internet in our society and the world, I believe that the best way to look at this is as early evidence of what lies ahead.

Description of the Focus Group Participants

California Groups

Three adult learner focus groups were held in California during February 12-15, 1996. All three were held in community colleges and the participants were studying ESOL. They were primarily pre-college students, and most appeared to range from intermediate through upper ESOL levels. They were from a range of Asian and Latin American countries: Viet Nam, China, India, Mexico, Thailand, and others.

All three students in the first group (Rancho Santiago Community College and ABC Adult School) had used the Internet and one was an experienced user.

Two of the eight students in the second group (Mission College) had used the Internet and one of these was an experienced user.

Six of the ten students in the third group (Mission College) had used the Internet once or twice, or were new users, but none of these was an experienced user.

Southern Ohio Group

One adult learner focus group was held in Southern Ohio on April 24th, at the Hamilton, Ohio ABLE program. The 12 ABE participants, 11 of whom were women, said they were pursuing their GED's.

In total, 33 students participated in the 4 focus groups, 3 in the group at Rancho Santiago, 8 and 10 in the two groups at Mission College, and 12 in the group at the Hamilton ABLE program.

Percentage of Students Using the Internet in these Groups

23 students (70%) had used or were currently using the Internet; only two of these would describe themselves as "experienced Internet users" and 18 (55%) described themselves as "new Internet users." 6 students (18%) said they wanted to use the Internet but hadn't yet had the opportunity. Of course, these were very biased samples -- only students who had used -- or who wanted to use -- the Internet were invited to attend the focus groups.

Where Students Get Access to the Internet

The students who used the Internet did so from school (all the Rancho Santiago and Hamilton students accessed it from school) and home (the five Mission college students who were using the Internet were accessing it from home, and only learned that access was available from school through the focus groups). One Mission college student had access to company email (and possibly Internet email) at work. No one was getting access from public libraries, and it wasn't clear that Internet access was yet available in public libraries.

Why Students Who Don't yet have Access Want it

Students at Mission College, many of whom were not using the Internet yet, or who were very new users, cited the following as reasons for getting online:

- Take a course, for example an English course -- and avoid a 40 minute drive. (Note: English Technical writing is taught at Mission College through the Internet, and there is at least one other course taught this way. When others were asked if they would want to take an English course this way they were skeptical. One student said she wanted to meet people in person. Another felt that it would be difficult to teach English speaking this way. A third commented that she was improving her English reading and writing skills now through using realtime chat.
- Participating in other kinds of learning and teaching
- Getting stock quotes (At least one student had done this.)
- Face-to-face desktop video communication
- Purchase airline tickets or other products
- Do comparison shopping (At least one student had done this.)
- Get weather information (At least one student had done this.)
- Get health information (medicines, food/nutrition)
- Publishing their writing

Why Student Internet Users Go Online

They:

- Get new, interesting information, do quick searches by topics (Some of the classes at Rancho Santiago College require students to use the Internet)
- Browse for today's news
- Look for information, access to information about other countries, travel (Thailand, France, Mexico, Brazil, etc.)
- Use the Whole Internet Catalog (online)

- Browse catalogs, travel sites
- Use search engines (One student found Mission College through using a Web search engine which led her to the College's homepage!)
- Read news from India (home country) on Netcom; The student used a search engine, typing in "India" to find "India.world"
- Get cricket match scores
- Entered a contest, won a free trip to San Diego!
- Learn to improve English through "chat"
- Play online games
- Read online comics
- Virtual travel to other parts of the U.S. and to other countries: Pacific Ocean, Greece, Virgin Islands
- Meet people from other countries as keypals
- Improve writing skills, learn new words, through writing key-pals, through recording results of virtual visits to other countries.
- Get new recipes
- One student commented that she likes having the control (power) and freedom she feels when she uses a computer and uses the World Wide Web.

(Students also use CD-ROMs -- Grolier Encyclopedia -- and at least one student appeared not to remember if what she saw was from the CD-ROM or on the Internet. For her it was a seamless electronic world.)

Difficulties Students Encounter When Using the Internet

There were several categories of problems that students experienced: getting online, figuring out how to use the Internet, reading, and others.

a) Getting online

- Getting an Internet account
- Finding "line busy, try again" takes too much time.
- One student mentioned that sometimes with her Service Provider there is a two-hour wait.
- Time -- waiting time to get to the server; slow speeds when too many users are online

- Costs of hardware and for access use. (Some students felt the costs were prohibitive, some didn't.)
- A LAN that freezes up (there was apparently some kind of incompatibility between the Internet software and the Integrated Learning System software on the program's Local Area Network and this caused problems in using the LAN on the Internet.A participant in the teachers' focus group later described this as like trying to mow the lawn with a power mower that kept breaking down.)
- If the electricity goes out, there is no access.
- Because in this student's program, there was only one computer with access to the Internet, and because students could only use it two at a time, each student didn't get much time to use it.
- Once online, figuring out where to go, clicking everywhere

b) Figuring out how to use the Internet

- Need easier-to-read instructions on how to use the Internet
- One group of students said they had no trouble figuring out how to use the Internet, and explained that their teachers gave them very explicit, written directions, they followed them, and had no trouble. They were also given assignments -- searches to perform using a search engine, Web Crawler.

c) Reading

- One person commented that reading on-screen was difficult, that sometimes he prints out hard copy
- One group said that reading text on the Internet was not a problem, and they liked to read on-screen.

d) Other Problems

- Learning how to use a computer is not as easy as a telephone
- Time involved in learning to use the computer, Internet
- Typing skills
- Some Internet information costs money
- Computer viruses
- Using the Internet ties up a telephone line
- Some information is old, not updated on some sites
- Availability of offensive material

Training or Supports Which Help Students to overcome these difficulties

Some of the responses included what students thought would be helpful to them; some included what was already helpful.

- Partnering together with other students to solve problems
- One student's husband taught her to use the Internet because he wanted her to improve her English reading skills.When he wasn't at home she used his account.When she got stuck she wrote down information on the problem then phoned him.
- Learning from a friend
- Asking other America Online members
- Taking a computer course
- Chats (in the college computer lab) were helpful in improving reading and writing skills
- Learning language skills and computer skills together.
- Reading an Internet book
- A videocassette on how to use the Internet
- A course -- where the instructor shows students how to do it
- A live, interactive TV program on how to use the Internet. with telephone call-in questions
- Computer software which teaches how to use the Internet
- Practice time
- Training provided by teachers in person, and through instructional handouts

What was NOT helpful

- No formal training
- AOL help menu not useful

Internet Resources/Sites/Features Students Would Like to Find

- Desktop videophone (Picture-tel, or CU-See Me)
- A big map of the world that one could click on and which would have more maps at the country, region, local levels
- More information by voice instead of by text, for example directions on how to use the Internet -- by voice

- Ways of sorting through the massive amounts of information
- Would like the Internet to be more graphical; icons to show how to get in and out of sites, instead of text
- Need simple, easy directions.
- Need easy quick access to get to where we want
- World news
- American news
- Cartoons
- Information for research
- Weather news
- History
- Jobs -- applying for them
- Medical advice and Information on health and illness
- Entertainment (sports, movies, plays, CD's to sample, purchase)
- A translator
- Banking
- Cyber-travel, by Internet instead of by car
- Virtual Touring (Brooklyn Bridge, Florida, Australia, Carribean, etc.)
- Hobbies (animals, gardening, fishing)
- Learning about other cultures
- Getting information, e.g. one student went to a site with information about renting or buying a house, how to find a house, finance it, etc.)

Other Comments

- A lot of students don't know that their schools have Internet accessibility, or what it is. Most students didn't know that there are public places to access Internet computers, and where they are: schools, libraries, community computing centers.
- Some students said they are afraid of computers
- I had mentioned that it was possible to find good health information on the Web, and one student was very interested in pursuing this, to get information on Cerebral Palsy because a family member had this disease.

Conclusions

Adult literacy/basic education/ESOL students are beginning to use the Internet. An increasing number are very interested in using it for a wide range of purposes: for learning (e.g. to improve reading and writing skills, or take a course;) to access a wide variety of information (e.g. information about the weather, health, travel, other cultures, American news, and -- in the case of ESOL students -- news from their native countries;) for classes at school; for shopping; to communicate with friends, family members, other students, or key pals; for entertainment; for virtual travel; and for the sense of control and power one can feel when using a computer and the Internet.

Adult students appear to experience many of the same kinds of difficulties in using the Internet that their teachers do: problems getting access and getting online; having the system crash for a variety of reasons; difficulty figuring out how to navigate online;
problems with online and hardcopy instructions; finding out-of-date information at sites; and reading on-screen. Some students also cited problems with their keyboard skills.

Students found that it helped to partner with other students (or with a family member or friend;) to ask for help online; to use online chat rooms; to combine English language learning with computer skills; to read books about the Internet; to look at a videocassette on how to use the Internet; to take an Internet course; to participate in a live, interactive TV program on how to use the Internet; to use computer software which teaches how to use the Internet; to participate in training provided in-person by a teacher; and to have time to practice what one is learning.

Students have a clear idea of what they would like to use or find on the Internet: on-line videotelephone (especially to friends and relatives in other parts of the country or the world); more information by voice instead of by text; better search engines, filters, or other ways to find information; more graphical ways to navigate; simple, easy-to-use directions; and language translators.

Recommendations

1) This study provides clear evidence that some adult students are using -- or want to use -- the Internet, but it also suggests that access is still a daunting problem. One thing which practitioners can do immediately is to inventory free or low-cost Internet access resources in their communities and let their students know where and how these are available.

2) ESOL programs should consider offering classes which simultaneously teach computer/Internet skills with English language skills.

3) Those who are designing Web-based resources for adult learners might consider organizing these around interests which students have articulated here:

- Jobs information (including online jobs databases)
- Health information (including medical advice online)
- International news, by country
- Sports (including soccer and cricket)
- Movies and plays

- Virtual travel (listed by country)
- Information on other countries and their cultures
- Homebuying
- Online cartoons and comics
- Games
- Keypal sources
- Recipes
- Online maps from all over the world
- Weather information, and Hobbies (animals, gardening, fishing and others)

4) Although this was not an explicit finding of this study, it was clear that the students interviewed in these groups were among the few students who have access to the Internet. Increasing programs' capacity to purchase and use hardware and software, and to connect to the Internet must become a higher national, state and local priority if we are to see the kinds of experiences discussed here become widespread across the country.

The Internet for Beginners: A Staff Development Model for Adult Education Practitioners

David J. Rosen. Ed.D., Director
Adult Literacy Resource Institute
Boston, Massachusetts

September 30, 1996

This is a staff development model designed to help adult literacy/basic education/ESOL practitioners who have little or no experience using the Internet or computers. The model is based on research I carried out through a fellowship from the National Institute for Literacy in 1995-1996. The model was successfully piloted in the Spring of 1996 with 32 adult literacy/basic education/ESOL practitioners from the greater Boston area. A full evaluation of its impact will be conducted in the Winter or Spring of 1997.

Participants

Adult literacy/basic education/ESOL practitioners

Overall Goals

As a result of this staff development experience participants should:

1. feel comfortable using computer hardware and Internet software;
2. begin to use email, listservs, Web sites and Usenet groups;
3. be excited about using these tools for themselves and with their students;
4. have at least one compelling purpose for using the Internet; and
5. feel confident enough in using computers and the Internet to solve, or get help in solving, their software and hardware problems.

Format

This model includes: 1) two full days of presentations and hands-on computer Internet lab experience; 2) at least three weeks between the two days for homework and practice; and 3) technical assistance available by telephone. The model requires a trainer and training assistant for each group of 10 - 20 participants.

Participant Learning Objectives for the Two-day Training

1. In a large group presentation (using LCD/Overhead) participants will see at least 5 useful and engaging ABE or ESOL Web sites and consider how they might use them with their students or colleagues.

In a hands-on computer laboratory, participants will:

2. Use e-mail to send and receive messages, and to send attached files;

3. Subscribe, and then before the end of training unsubscribe, to at least one ABE/ESOL-related listserv;

4. Install and configure a Web browser such as Netscape and the software needed to graphically connect to an Internet Service Provider;

5. Use Telnet;

6. Use search engines (such as Yahoo, Infoseek or Altavista to find web pages on a topic of personal or professional interest;

7. Use FTP, and Gopher; and

8. Subscribe and unsubscribe to a Usenet group.

Homework

1. Using a prepared list of ABE/ESOL Websites (The Literacy List, or Adult Literacy Starter World Wide Web Pages, Tom Eland's Internet Directory of Literacy and Adult Education or other such list), and a computer with a graphic user interface (GUI) browser such as Netscape or Mosaic, become familiar with good Web sites by writing brief "Webliography" reviews for at least five sites. (See attached sample Webliography.)

2. Prepare a lesson plan for students or colleagues based on a Web site.

Day One Activities

1) Introduction of participants and presenters; setting of participants' goals and objectives (reviewing the objectives listed above and asking participants for other goals and objectives which they may have); overview of training; description of follow-up technical assistance (1/2 hour presentation and discussion)

2) Basic introduction to computers and the Internet (1 - 1 1/2 hours of presentation and questions) Depending on the participants, this might include basic information about how

a computer works, what a modem is and how it works, what the Internet is, and what a browser is.

3) Hands-on in the computer lab: introduction to e-mail. Each participant will learn to use a basic e-mail program such as PINE or Eudora , will compose and send messages to someone who will immediately respond, and then will send messages to other participants. They will also practice sending files, and will subscribe to a listserv. (1 hour)

Lunch

4) Hands-on in the computer lab: introduction to using a GUI browser (e.g. Netscape) including basic buttons, and at least two search engines (1 hour guided practice)

5) Installing and configuring connectivity software and a browser (1 hour guided practice)

6) Practice browsing Web sites -- beginning homework (1 1/2 hour independent practice with Website lists and technical assistance available)

For homework, participants prepare 5 short Web site reviews and a lesson plan and bring these in sufficient copies for all participants and instructors to the second day of training.

Day Two Activities

1) Large group discussion of problems encountered during practice, and demonstration of solutions where possible. Also, discussion of opportunities, content, and resources discovered which might be useful to other participants, their colleagues, or their students. Participants also pass out and discuss their Web site reviews. (1 - 2 hours)

2) Guided practice in the lab: Introduction to FTP and Gopher (1 hour)

Lunch

3) Guided practice in the lab: subscribing to Usenet groups (1/2 hour)

4) Discussion of lesson plans (1 1/2 hours)

5) Demonstration of other Internet features or time for further independent practice in the lab.

Selection of Participants

I recommend using a written application process to select participants so that the training will be of most benefit. In the application, they should verify that they have easy and regular access to a computer connected to a modem, telephone and Internet Service Provider; and that they have an Internet account. Unfortunately, teachers are sometimes promised hardware, software, or Internet accounts which do not materialize until months later, if at all, and participants soon forget skills

learned in training when they cannot be applied. So it is important that they already have an Internet account when they apply for training.

Participants also need to identify their needs or purposes for learning to use the Internet. Without compelling purposes teachers often do not persevere to overcome the obstacles in learning or using these electronic tools.

Teachers who are selected should discuss their attending this training with the person who supervises them. If possible, the administrators should attend training first so they understand the value of using the Internet, and also what is involved. This may lead to their being more supportive of the teachers' use of the Internet.

Finally, if possible, the training sessions should be leveled, with beginners in one group, those who are comfortable with computers but new to the Internet in another, and more experienced Internet users in a different kind of training altogether.

Training Hardware and Software

Training should take place in a lab setting, with an LCD or InFocus large screen projector available. Use the same hardware (at least the same platform) and software as the teachers will be using at the worksites. This is critical for those who have not had much experience using computers.

Learning Styles

People have different learning styles. Some prefer having print materials. Some like to get to work
hands-on as soon as possible. Some benefit from hearing presentations or seeing video introduction/demonstrations. Vary the ways participants can get the information and skills they need.

Technical Assistance

In the three weeks between the two days of training, provide technical assistance by telephone, and if possible on-site. Encourage participants to arrange their computers, if possible, so that there is another telephone line (or cordless or cellular telephone) nearby so they can talk by voice phone with a technical assistance person while proceeding step-by-step through on-screen problem-solving. The technical assistance person (or team) should include someone who can sympathetically answer beginners' questions which may not be well-formed and may not include the correct terms. Encourage participants to choose or find a "techno-buddy," someone who is a step or two ahead in the use of the Internet, someone they like and trust, with whom they can solve problems.

Documentation

For the first day of training prepare clearly written one- or two-pagers ("cheat sheets") which have a minimum of jargon, screen illustrations of steps to be performed, a glossary of technical terms, and a good index. Also, provide a short list of helpful Internet books and online help resources. (See online resources at the end of The Literacy List, page 45.)

Practice

Participants need time -- ideally paid time -- to practice using these new skills on their own computers in the classroom, office and/or home. Even successful training sessions amount to very little if participants can't practice during training and afterwards -- and solidly learn -- the new skills. Provide an Internet account -- at least for the first year -- and an ample or unlimited number of hours on the Internet account so, as one teacher put it, they don't feel that "the meter is running."

Feelings

Teachers have strong feelings about the Internet (and computer technology) in their lives. These feelings of enthusiasm and empowerment, on one hand, and fear and frustration, on the other, affect Internet use. Encourage teachers to discuss their feelings -- if they wish -- during the training.

Fearless Experimentation

Just as we want students to become independent, resourceful, self-sufficient learners -- people who can learn on their own, but who are also not afraid to ask for help from others -- we must also foster an attitude of fearless experimentation among their teachers who attend Internet training.

APPENDIX

The Literacy List
< http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/LiteracyList.html >

Webliography
< http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/webliography.html >

The Literacy List
World Wide Web Pages
Directories & Search Tools

Last Updated December 20, 1997

Disclaimer: this section is created and maintained as a World Wide Web document. Location of sites may change without notice. For the most updated version of this section, please see

`http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/websites.html`

HPPC's Online Educational Resources
This includes a huge resource list with education subject trees, including some adult education sites.

- http://quest.arc.nasa.gov/OER/

Internet Directory of Literacy and Adult Education
Comprehensive on-line adult literacy Internet directory by Tom Eland

- http://archon.educ.kent.edu/Midwest/Resc/Litdir/index.html

Searching the WEB with "Search Engines"
AltaVista, Excite, Infoseek, Lycos, Yahoo, and others

- http://www.ipl.org/ref/websearching.html

ADULT LITERACY / BASIC EDUCATION / ESOL WEB-SITES

Literacy Assistance Center
(New York City)

- http://www.lacnyc.org

Literacy onLine
Resources for teachers, tutors, and students; Adult literacy; ESL; workplace; and general resources.

- http://www.thinkshop.edu/al/

Mediadesigns
Although the primary audience for this site is K12 teachers, it has a monthly calendar of historical events with hypertext links to pertinent articles on the Web. This could be useful to Adult Secondary Education teachers teaching GED or EDP classes, or for literacy teachers who want to include timely readings (e.g. Martin Luther King's Birthday, Black History Month readings, and others) in their classes.

- http://home.earthlink.net/~mediadesigns/Index.html

MetroBoston CommunityWide Education and Information Service (MBCWEIS)
Includes: web pages of community-based adult literacy/basic education/ESOL programs of the Greater Boston Literacy Telecommunications Collaborative; resources for adult students; resources for teachers of adult students; immigrant resources, and many others.

- http://www2.wgbh.org/ MBCWEIS/mbcweisHome.html

- ***Adult Literacy Resource Institute (Boston)***
  http://www2.wgbh.org/ MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/alri.html
  - The Literacy List
    This list -- on-line and updated regularly
    http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/LiteracyList.html

  - Literacy Webliography
    Web sites for adult literacy/basic skills/ESOL reviewed by adult education teachers
    http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/webliography.html

  - Web-based Lessons
    Lessons designed to use Web sites in the adult classroom
    http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/lessonplans.html

  - How Easy is it for Adult Educators to use the Information Superhighway ?
    A study of how adult basic education practitioners are using the Internet
    http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/Cruising.html

  - How Adult Literacy Practitioners are Using the Internet
    http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/teacherfocusgroups.html

  - How Adult Learners are Using the Internet
    http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/
    ALRI/learnerfocusgroups.html

  - The Internet for Beginners: A Staff Development Model for Adult Education Practitioners
    http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/trainingmodel.html

- Inquiry Maps
  Articles on project-based, web-based, inquiry learning
  http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/I.M.html

  Examples of hypermedia inquiry maps
  - Nutrition Inquiry Map
    - ◊ http://www2.wgbh.org/mbcweis/ltc/sccc/Nutrlmap/example.html
  - Headaches Inquiry Map
    - ◊ http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/AACA/headache.htm
  - Immigration Inquiry Map
    - ◊ http://www2.wgbh.org/mbcweis/immigrantmap.html
  - Next Steps Inquiry Map
    - ◊ http://www2.wgbh.org/mbcweis/nextsteps.html

National Adult Literacy Database (NALD - CANADA)

- http://www.nald.ca/

National Center for Adult Literacy (NCAL - USA)

- http://litserver.literacy.upenn.edu

National Center for the Study of Adult Literacy and Learning (NCSALL - USA)

- http://hugse1.harvard.edu/~ncsall/

National Institute for Literacy (NIFL LINCS - USA)

- http://novel.nifl.gov/

- Eastern LINCS Region
  - http://hub1.worlded.org/
    - ◊ Student Work Online
      - http://hub1.worlded.org/teachers/student.htm
- Southern LINCS Region
  - http://tlrc.tamu.edu/slcc/

- Midwest LINCS Region
  - http://archon.educ.kent.edu/Midwest/index.html

- Western and Pacific LINCS Region
  - http://www.lityeracynet.org/

Outreach and Technical Assistance Network (OTAN)

- http://www.otan.dni.us

- ***California Distance Learning Project (CDLP)***
  Includes San Francisco CNN stories for new readers
  - http://www.otan.dni.us/cdlp/cdlp.html

- ***Email Project***
  Includes current and completed on-line adult learning projects such as the annual Cookbook Project, the Internet Pizza Project, Home Remedies, an adult learners' annotated bibliography, and others
  - http://www.otan.dni.us/webfarm/emailproject/email.htm

- ***Multiple Intelligences for Adult Literacy and Adult Education***
  "Multiple Intelligences for Adult Literacy and Adult Education explores innovative ways to apply the theory of multiple intelligences to basic skills, learning styles, and adult literacy education.

  This site focuses in on helping instructors and students discover their many intelligences and how to use them effectively in mastering whatever content is being learned in the classroom and at home. The emphasis is on tapping the student's unique and natural learning processes to ensure success."
  - http://www.literacynet.org/diversity/

- ***Lifelong Learning Online (LLLO)***
  Includes Voter Involvement Project
  - http://www.otan.dni.us/cdlp/lllo/home.html

Teachers' Place
Useful for Math GED students

- http://forum.swarthmore.edu/teachers/k12.teachers.html

ESOL WEB-SITES

Dave's ESL Cafe
Current news, geography, grammar, history, idioms, slang and words, people, reading comprehension, science, world culture, writing

- http://www.eslcafe.com/

- ***The ESL Quiz Center***
  - http://www.pacificnet.net/~sperling/quiz/
- ***ESLSlang Page***
  - http://www.eslcafe.com/slang
    A search-able list of American slang words and phrases with short definitions

Email Project
Includes current and completed on-line adult learning projects such as the annual Cookbook Project, the Internet Pizza Project, Home Remedies, an adult learners' annotated bibliography and others

- http://www.otan.dni.us/webfarm/emailproject/email.htm

ESL Home Page

- http://www.lang.uiuc.edu/r-li5/esl/

ESL Lesson Plans and Resources
A straightforward, comprehensive list of lesson plans and one of the best hypertext lists of practical, teacher-oriented ESL/ESOL resources I have seen.

- http://www.csun.edu/~hcedu013/eslplans.html

ESL Loop
This is a collection of sites related to English language teaching and learning. It includes the E-Mail Project Homepage, TESL Ontario, and Computers and English Language and Literacy Education, among others

- http://www.linguistic-funland.com/esloop/

The ESL Student Projects page
This site offers several interesting topics written by Mission College (Northern California) ESL students. Topics include: "Customs around the World," "Domestic Violence," "The Fall of Saigon," "Friendship," "The Meaning of Names," and "Surprises and Problems of ESL Students."

- http://www.wvmccd.cc.ca.us/mc/ESL/StudProj/Student_Projects.html

Exchange
Electronic, Xross Cultural Hypertextual Academy of Non-native Gatherings in English
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

- http://deil.lang.uiuc.edu/exchange/

Fluency Through Fables
For ESOL learners, stories and online, interactive exercises

- http://www.comenius.com/fable/index.html

Grammar Safari
Students can experience English as it occurs in its natural surroundings. Many of the millions of English texts readily available on the World Wide Web can be electronically searched for English grammar structures. "Grammar safari" activities are suggestions for "hunting" and "collecting" examples of specific words as they are used in Worldwide Web documents.

- http://deil.lang.uiuc.edu/web.pages/grammarsafari.html

HUT Internet Writing Project
Online writing project, teacher resources for writing, language and grammar helps, etc.

- http://www.hut.fi/~rvilmi/Project/

Impact! Online home page
A hypertext newsreader for intermediate and advanced ESOL learners

- http://lrs.ed.uiuc.edu/Impact/

Internet TESL Journal
This site offers lots of very usable information for classroom teachers, including lesson plans.

- http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/

Language Testing
A great list of ESOL assessment sites

- http://www.surrey.ac.uk/ELI/ltr.html

Learning English On the World Wide Web (Leo Lab English Page)

- http://www.aec.ukans.edu/LEO/english/english.html

National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE)
Located on the Center for Applied Linguistics web site, this features 41 download-able ERIC Digests about teaching adult ESL (arranged by topic); info about other NCLE publications and services; and a link to the ERIC system

- http://www.cal.org/ncle/

OPPortunities in ESL...THEME-BASED PAGES
Topics include: AIDS, Environment, Gender Issues, Migration in Humanity, Native Americans, Holidays, Treasure Hunts and many others

- http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~leslieob/themes.html

Virtual English Language Center
Weekly idiom, email key pals, links to other sites

- http://www.comenius.com

VOLTERRE-FR
Pointers to Internet projects for learners and teachers of ESOL

- http://www.wfi.fr/volterre/inetpro.html

Weekly Idiom Index
Over 40 English idiom lessons as of mid-March, 1996

- http://www.comenius.com/idiom/complete.html

FAMILY LITERACY WEBSITES

Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site
A collection of reviews of great books for kids, ideas of ways to use them in the classroom and collections of books and activities about particular subjects, curriculum areas, themes and professional topics.

- http://www.carolhurst.com/

Educational Software Institute
Educational Software Institute (ESI Online) is a large collection of K-12 educational software - more than 8,000 titles from over 350 publishers.

- http://www.edsoft.com/q/index.html

The Childrens' Literature Web Guide
Internet resources related to books for Children and Young Adults

- http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/

National Center for Family Literacy

- http://novel.nifl.gov/ncfl/NCFLTOP1.HTM

National Parent Information Network
Information for parents and those who work with parents to foster the exchange of parenting materials. Has a fabulous search engine which provides access to a treasure of online articles. I searched for family + health and came up with links to over 200 documents!

- http://ericps.ed.uiuc.edu/npin/npinhome.html

Parents and Children Together Online
An online magazine for parents and children. It "features original stories and articles for children, suitable for reading aloud. A special section for parents features articles on issues related to children's reading and writing and book reviews of recent children's literature."

- http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/fl/pcto/menu.html

CYFERNET
This site provides hundreds of complete on-line publications featuring practical, research based, Children, Youth, and Family information in six major areas: health, child-care, promoting family strength, strengthening community based programs, building organizational collaborations and science and technology programs.

- http://www.cyfernet.mes.umn.edu/

HEALTH WEBSITES

HealthLinks
Health education topics for at-risk adolescents, young adults and adults, sponsored by the Massachusetts Corporation for Educational Telecommunications (MCET)

- http://www.mcet.edu/healthlinks/

MBCWEIS Health Links
Links to health-related Web Pages listed on the Resources for Adult Students and Teachers Page of the Metropolitan Boston Community Wide Education and Information Service (MBCWEIS)

- http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/resources.html

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING WEBSITES

HealthLinks Work Readiness Resources
Includes school-to-work resources, and career and job search resources

- http://phoenix.mcet.edu/healthlinks/workr.html

O*NET
Occupational Information Databases

- http://www.doleta.gov/programs/onet/

Training and Technical Resource Center
One-stop career centers, labor market information, school-to-work, JTPA, skill standards

- http://www.ttrc.doleta.gov/

ON-LINE RESEARCH AND REFERENCE WEBSITES

AskERIC

- http://ericir.sunsite.syr.edu/

or

- http://ericir.syr.edu

Internet Public Library

- http://www.ipl.org/

Webster's on-line hypertext Dictionary

- http://c.gp.cs.cmu.edu:5103/prog/webster

The Adult Education Teacher's Annotated Webliography

Last Updated October 25, 1997

Disclaimer: this section is created and maintained as a World Wide Web document. Location of sites may change without notice. For the most updated version of this section, please see

`http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/webliography.html`

This collection of Website reviews, which has now grown to include over 50 Websites, was begun by adult literacy/basic education/ESOL educators in the Boston area in the Spring of 1996. The reviews have been compiled, edited and updated by David J. Rosen, Director of the Adult Literacy Resource Institute, the Greater Boston Regional Support Center of the Massachusetts System for Adult Basic Education Support. The first reviewers were enrolled in the 1996 Boston Internet Training Project workshops funded by a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Education. Time to produce the original document was made possible by the editor's 1995-1996 fellowship from the National Institute for Literacy. Reviews of Web sites are added periodically, and the Webliography is regularly updated. Additional short reviews by adult education practitioners -- from anywhere -- may be submitted to the editor at DJRosen@world.std.com

Web site reviews will be found under the following categories:

1. Student and Teacher Resources 56

2. ESOL (ESL) 70

3. Adult Secondary Education (GED/EDP) 79

4. Project-based Learning 79

5. Adult Education Research 82

6. Grants Information 83

7. Other Interesting Sites 84

Student and Teacher Resources

MetroBoston Community-Wide Education and Information Service (Review 1 of 3)

http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/mbcweisHome.html

This is a good resource site. It includes information about many local learning centers in the Greater Boston area. Not only does it give information about the programs offered in each center, it also gives the history and mission statement of the centers. I would suggest that you read through the possibilities before you click. Then go back and look at the information given in one or another of the local learning centers.

From this site, you can connect to many other resources on the World Wide Web. It was here I discovered the link to lycos, alta vista, et al! (bookmark this one!)

Ellen Dabrieo, SND
Notre Dame Education Center
South Boston, Massachusetts
June, 1996

MetroBoston Community-Wide Education and Information Service (Review 2 of 3)

http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/mbcweisHome.html

You can tell that people in the field helped to pull this home page together. I think it is a wonderful resource for teachers. It has basic information on what resources are available to local adult literacy programs and descriptions of each local adult education program in the Boston adult literacy technology collaborative. It has information on how to get learners involved in chats with learners in other programs, and even has curriculum that is ready to go.

One example is the numeracy exercises, which take math beyond the traditional pencil and paper grind. In addition, it has quick reference information on topics which teachers and students use on a daily basis. For example, I went into Boston weather and got a 5-day forecast. I was psyched to see that I could then check the 5-day forecast for anywhere in the world. So, I checked a couple of places.

Clearly this has immediate potential for curriculum development. ESOL students could do a weekly weather report for the class, or research the weather forecast in their own countries and then compare and contrast it with Boston's. I could go on and on about this site. Well worth the trip!

Deirdre Kennedy
Anthony D. Perkins Community Center
Boston, MA
June 12, 1996

MetroBoston Community-Wide Education and Information Service (Review 3 of 3)

http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/mbcweisHome.html

This home page seems to be an elaborate and extensive list of community-based information networks and resources. In the Resources category, I checked into immigration information . This is an "award winning site" and indeed there was a plethora of interesting, useful and important information. For example, one category display gave up-to-date information on how to "vote smart" regarding immigration issues. Others covered legal status, work permits and visas; information pertinent to emigres from Bosnia-Herzegovina, and actual immigration forms.

In the Links to Services category I checked into Boston weather (convenient) and Job search help/Globe . The Job Search Help was really impressive. I will never use the newspaper again! ;-) Not only was it easier to read than small newspaper print ads, but the job categories are much more narrowly defined. You can search for a job under categories from 'architecture' to 'waste management.' It is updated every Monday.

There seems to be tons of useful information at this site. I feel I have only skimmed the surface.

Julie McConville
International Institute of Boston
Boston, MA
June 7, 1996

Massachusetts One-Stop Career Center Network

http://www.masscareers.state.ma.us/

The Massachusetts One-Stop Career Center Network proposes a state-of-the-art doorway to employment and job training services. Since most of the Career Centers have been set up just recently, not all of their services are up and running yet. On the network's homepage, there are four broad categories: one tells you who they are, and the other three are services they provide for individuals, employers and training providers. The Services for Individuals and Services for Employers links are currently working, but the link for Services for Training Providers (as of 6/10/96) was still under construction. There is also a Feedback link as the Career Centers are supposed to be customer-satisfaction driven.

Under Services for Individuals, links can be made to job banks (One-Stop Career Center Bank, Internet Job Banks and Business Job Banks), Education and Training, and Labor Marker Information.

Under Services for Employers two of the four links (Labor Marker Information and Find a Career Center) are also provided under other categories. The other two links are Link Your Site to Us and Talent Bank, which (as of 6/10/96) was still under construction.

Under Who We Are, background information about the development of the One-Stops as well as current One-Stop news (though there is no news yet) are provided. Under Where We Are, a career center can be found by selecting a region on the map.

The information available on this site could be very useful to students, teachers, career counselors and job developers in Massachusetts. And it is very user-friendly. For example: to search for a job in the job banks, you can simply search by a key word of a job title or position and (if you wish) specify the preferred part of the state. Then a report of the number of jobs found is presented in a chart which lists the jobs' posting number, title, location and salary. To narrow the search further, you can specify your educational level, hours per week that you wish to work, job type (permanent, temporary, etc.), hourly or yearly salary desired.

Annie Chin
Asian American Civic Association
Boston, MA
June 10, 1996

O*NET

http://www.doleta.gov/programs/onet/

The O*NET site represents the Occupational Information Network, a database system being developed by the U.S. Department of Labor to replace the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT). Although the Dictionary will not be online until sometime in '98, this site can be used now because it generates a large number of connections (links) involving workforce development activities and resources.

This site can be used by teachers, counselors, and students because the links provide many useful site connections. There is a wealth of information, but be prepared to spend a good amount of time. It may take awhile to get to the exact information you want, because it is easy to get sidetracked. Set aside a good amount of time for searching; however, when I went there the links connected very quickly.

For example, from the O*NET homepage, I scrolled down about three screens and selected (from the left side menu) Frequently Asked Questions. From this page (again -- about three screens down), I selected Visit the Web sites of other key workforce development initiatives... This connected me to the page, Links to Related DOL/ETA Workforce Initiatives, where I found such sites as America's Job Bank, America's Talent Bank, School to Work, and Career Exploration Center (to name a few). Scrolling to the bottom of the screen, I selected Career Exploration Center , which brought me to the new page, ETA Individuals - Career Exploration, which provided such topic selections as: Starting a New Career, Choosing a Career, and Jobs By Company. I selected, Starting a New Career. This took me to Using Resources on the Internet to Plan your Future, where I found Internet Job Search, which listed the topics I had in mind when I started my search. The topics included:

1. Why bother to use the Internet?

2. How the Internet can help.

3. Comprehensive directories.

4. Private Job lists.

5. Newspaper ads.

6. Newsgroup job listings.

7. Search Firms.

8. Resumes.

9. Career advice.

10. Research tools.

Susan Barnard
S.C.A.L.E.
Somerville, MA
October 4, 1997

Maps

http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/MAPS.html

This set of links presents teachers and students with a variety of options for studying maps. The user can choose countries around the world, or specific states in the United States to browse and study.

For local information, it is excellent. The site provides maps of the State of Massachusetts and the cities of Boston and Cambridge, including an interactive street map of the Boston area, and a map of the MBTA subway system.

It is a great way for students to learn to read and understand maps and a wonderful tool for helping them learn to get around the local area.

Joyce A. Barney
WAITT House
Boston, MA
May 1996

Immigration Information (for Recent Immigrants and Others)

HTTP://WWW2.WGBH.ORG/MBCWEIS/IMMIGRANTS.HTML

This page has links with valuable information for recent immigrants and refugees as well as for others who are interested in immigration issues. Many practical and interesting classroom activities can be generated from these resources.

In this recent anti-immigrant climate, immigrants are often scapegoated for the general failings in society. Myths such as that immigrants are taking all the American jobs and draining the economy can be countered by The Demographic and Economic Facts. You and your students can also participate in the Immigration Opinion Poll by doing an on-line survey about recent immigration issues in America.

The Immigration Superhighway is especially useful for students with various legal status. This site can be read in English, Spanish and Russian. It provides information on getting a work permit, extending visits, requesting a change of status to become a permanent resident, eligibility for visa issuance in the U.S. and much more.

Annie Chin
Asian American Civic Association
Boston, MA
June 10, 1996

Immigration Inquiry Map

http://www2.wgbh.org/mbcweis/immigrantmap.html

This site presents a student-generated project done by the UMass Medical Center ESOL class It includes a survey for recent immigrants, as well as answers to some of the questions acquired through student research. Because it is student-centered, it is a wonderful place to go to elicit students' thoughts and opinions on immigration. Some sample questions include:

1. What is the Simpson Bill?

2. What are the main reasons people immigrate here?

3. How many people immigrate to the U.S. each year and what countries do they come from?

4. What is the biggest problem for second generation immigrants?

5. What do American citizens think about immigrants?

Students using this site are not only encouraged to explore the survey questions and research presented here, but to add any new questions, responses, or insights they may have. I am looking

forward to using this site as an initial way in to talking about immigration with my beginning level ABE students and to eventually having them follow up with their own research.

Wendy Hagan
Asian American Civic Association
Boston , MA
October 4, 1997

Kathy's Resources on Parenting, Domestic Violence, Abuse, Trauma & Dissociation

http://www.mcs.net/~kathyw/home.html

This site has a wealth of information concerning domestic violence, abuse, rape and assault where children or adults may be victims. Included are: links to domestic abuse hotlines, signs of abuse, abuse-related resources, sexual and domestic abuse, a survivor's page, and a section on male perspectives, with resources for abusers and victims who wish to break the cycle of abuse.

A related site for much of this information, ABUSE, is:

Firewheel Vortex

http://www.iceonline.net/vortex/abuse/

(Note: both sites can be accessed from the MBCWEIS Homepage . Begin with Resources for Teachers of Adults. Scroll down to the section on domestic violence and abuse. Under Essential Information and Resources, click on Information on Abuse, Assault, Rape, and Domestic Violence. Scroll down to Abuse, Assault, and Domestic Violence Resources. Click on Abuse Resources.)

Richard Goldberg
Asian American Civic Association
Boston, MA
June 1, 1996

Collected Visions

http://cvisions.nyu.edu

Collected Visions is a collaborative project which uses family snapshots collected from over 300 people to explore how family photographs have shaped our memories.

Users can search an on-line database of over 500 photographs by choosing from the following categories:

What is the time period of the photograph?

Who are the subjects in the photo?

If the subject is children, what are the ages of the children in the photo?

What is the photo of?

Where was the photo taken?

Either one or a number of photos appear on the screen and the user can choose and create a photo montage. Space is provided to write an essay about the photo(s). The user's written essay can then be checked/compared with the information originally submitted with the photo. The final product is a "photo essay" where the user has chosen the photos, written a text and chosen the format - image size, background color, text color, etc.

Additionally, users are invited to submit family snapshots to the project for "publication" in the database. It is this aspect of Collected Visions that appeals to me as a way of introducing the students I currently teach to computers and the Internet. Few, if any, are computer literate, and we do not have access to computers in our program at the moment. By having them first write in class about photos; then, if they choose to, submit their writings to the online project; and then introducing them to the project on the computer (probably at the public library), we can accomplish a number of objectives.

Joan Frutkoff
Jewish Vocational Services
Boston, MA
June 5, 1996

Education Teachers' Place

http://forum.swarthmore.edu/teachers/adult.ed

The Adult Education Teachers' Place provides teachers of GED-Math programs with information concerning the basics of a regular GED test, its challenges, how to overcome them and ways to provide the students with skills that will be useful to them beyond the GED test.

The first way the web site provides this information is through articles written by teachers with experience specific to GED-Math education. Within each of these articles, the author looks at one of the topics and provides the reader with personal experiences. They then suggest how to improve the teaching quality, and address questions that often come up concerning the use of different techniques, such as calculators and word problems. Further on in the series of articles, they discuss numeracy, its meaning and uses. In other words, they help a teacher to plan class

activities which relate math to everyday uses math more interesting by relating math to the students' own lives beyond the GED.

Each article contains a suggested reading list, through which teachers can find further articles on the topic. Then the website also provides further group distribution links for groups and councils that delve deeper into the aspects of teaching GED skills.

This website is a sub-site of the Teachers' Place, which is also a good resource for activities within the classroom dealing with Math and its uses. They update the site with a daily math problem which provides students of all ages with a fun challenge. Further, there are fun math learning skills and curriculum, and suggestions for any software that might assist teachers in planning a lesson.

I found this site to be very helpful in answering questions I've had surrounding challenging areas. It has connections to useful sites and resources, as well as provided ways to make math fun for any age, K-Adult.

Christine M. Luth
Project Hope
Boston, MA
October 4, 1997

Family Math Homepage

http://theory.lcs.mit.edu/~emjordan/famMath.html

This site is for math and family literacy teachers. It was set up by the University of California at Berkeley, and provides an overview of the school's family math project. The site includes back issues of a "Family Math" newspaper. It also offers a wide array of activities and games to promote collaborative learning among students.

Margaret McPartland
Jackson/Mann Community Center and RCC Prep
Boston, MA
June 6, 1996

The Numeracy Homepage -- Pizza Math

http://www2.wgbh.org/mbcweis/ltc/clc/numintro.html##activities

Pizza Math is a fun, interactive math activity which lends itself nicely to follow-up discussion. Students design their own "virtual pizzas" by selecting among humorous choices of toppings, sizes, and categories. Because prices and pictures of the toppings choices are not included on the menu, students are often surprised by what they see when their pizzas are printed out. Students can talk to students from other learning centers about the experience of selecting the "Let's Talk About Math" option.

Ashley Hager
Community Learning Center
Cambridge, MA
June 1, 1996

Lifelong Learning Online (LLLO): Key to Community -- Voter Involvement Project

http://www.otan.dni.us/cdlp/lllo/home.html

This is a self-study, interactive tutorial which focuses on issues about voting. It was created by adult learners to help other adult learners learn about voting.

The user can choose to go step-by-step through the entire tutorial or to work on individual sections, of which there are three:

1. How to vote
2. Easy Reader Voter Guide
3. How to be heard and to make a difference

Each section has a number of sub-sections, e.g. "How to vote" is divided into:

a) Getting ready to vote
b) Voting
c) Words to know
d) Credits

The material is presented in a number of formats -- giving information, answering yes/no, true/false and multiple choice questions.

The tutorial has a good teacher's page which provides the following information:

- What the tutorial is about, listing the three sections
- What is needed in terms of software for a user to access the tutorial

- What students need to know to do the tutorial.

The tutorial itself is well organized and fun to do, and could be especially useful for review for someone taking a citizenship class/test.

I have three reservations about this site:

1. It was difficult to access using the entire address. (As a novice, at first I didn't realize that I need not enter the whole address.)
2. It seemed to take a long time to get to the main menu and the body of the tutorial itself. There was a lot of unnecessary verbiage (often only two lines on a page).
3. The tutorial is very detailed and I got a little confused about which section I was in.

Joan Frutkoff
Jewish Vocational Services
Boston, MA
June 5, 1996

Community Outreach Health Information System (COHIS)

http://web.bu.edu/COHIS/

COHIS has been created by medical students at Boston University. It has a vast amount of health information. There is a main menu which introduces the reader to broad categories of health and medical information. Then each broad category is broken down into sub-categories through which you can retrieve information on particular subjects.

I investigated diet and nutrition, topics which would be useful in a family literacy program or other adult education program.

Gloria R Adomkaitis
Boston Public Schools
Boston, MA
June, 1996

HealthLinks (Review 1 of 2)

http://phoenix.mcet.edu/healthlinks/

The HealthLinks website provides access to webpages with health-related resources for under-served or at-risk learners. Health-related resources are grouped under three broad categories: HEALTH, LITERACY, and WORK READINESS. Under the topic of HEALTH one will find information on topics such as Nutrition, Reproductive Health, Parenting Skills, and Conflict Resolution. Each of the subtopics list more specific resources. For example, under Parenting

Skills, one may join an on-line discussion with other parents, or link to the National Parent Information Network. Under the topic of LITERACY, teachers can find information about the National Institute for Literacy, the National Center for Adult Literacy, and the Adult Literacy Resource Institute in Boston. The WORK READINESS category is comprehensive. Topics range from Careers on the Web, to Career Fairs and International Job Searches. This website provides access to the Occupational Outlook Handbook with various statistics and tables produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In addition to health-related topics, the HealthLinks homepage also has information about organizations that participated in the HealthLinks Project. It lists training opportunities and technical assistance available to teachers. At the end of the homepage there is a list of products produced by the Healthlinks Project such as videos, curriculum materials, and diskettes.

Lorna Rivera, Program Coordinator
Adult Education
Project Hope
Dorchester, MA
October 4, 1997

HealthLinks (Review 2 of 2)

http://phoenix.mcet.edu/healthlinks/

The HealthlLinks website contained a wealth of information regarding information and services available to young adults and adult s with education and/or learning problems.

We learn that videotapes, curriculum guides, and resource kits are available for anyone

Boston HealthLinks lists learning centers in Boston, for example, where special services are available. Community resources and places where additional information can be found are also listed. Information and program descriptions of alternate education sources such as School-to-Work, Young Parents Program , and High School to College Bridge are given.

This website can be an invaluable source for the student or teacher .

Jullia Maglliozzi
Boston Public Schools
October 4, 1997

Housing and How to Deal With Landlords

http://www2.wgbh.org/mbcweis/ltc/aaca/housing.htm

Housing and How to Deal with Landlords is a must-visit site for teachers of beginning levels ESOL learners, especially those learners still very much new in the U.S. It is very useful in

exposing students to what they need to know as tenants, from contacting the landlords about simple problems to dealing with difficult landlords. More importantly, it provides a list of objects around the house, that the students can simply click on, if the words are unfamiliar to view drawings of the objects to which the words refer.

This is particularly fascinating since the resources are student-generated. This site can also link you to other useful resources on the web.

Victor Eboigbe
Haitian Multi-service Center
Dorchester, MA
October 4, 1997

Virtual Sisterhood

http://www.igc.apc.org./vsister/index.html

I found this site helpful on many levels. It was developed to assist women in their use of technology. By going to Priorities, I became privy to an on-going discussion of issues such as software of special interest to junior-high girls, using the internet to alert women world travelers to areas/countries where women traveling alone might be in danger, and activists using the web to pressure the government of Nepal to take the issue of rape seriously.

Through the discussion, I discovered a number of other web sites of interest:

Femina

http://www.femina.com

Femina is a directory of web sites regarding women and girls. It includes a list for teachers interested in educational equity.

National Women's History Project

http://www.nwhp.org

The National Women's History Project linked from Femina. This site contains great quotes for my class. (Example: Every time a girl reads a womanless history she learns she is worth less. Sadler) It includes ideas for Women's History Month, and for teachers, parents and community members.

Through this site I linked to:

Her Heritage

http://www.plgrm.com/Her_Heritage.html

which contains a list of 1000 women's names arranged in various categories. More info is available on a software program, which can be purchased through this site. Then I linked to the International Women's Air and Space Museum home page. It contained biographies of selected women aviators and allowed you to link with even more lists of interest to women and girls and to sites such as the NASA home page.

Internet Public Library

http://ipl.sils.umich.edu/

I went to Reference, and Science and Technology in order to do research for a Botany unit I'm preparing to teach. The best site was the Tree Care Consumer Information from the International Society of Arboriculture. I had high hopes for the New York Botanical Garden home page but they did not include trees. Time-Life Encyclopedia of Plants had promise.

Cara Streck
Project Hope
Boston, Mass.
June 4, 1996

CNN

http://www.CNN.com

I like this site. I think it is great that you can get news on-line and eliminate buying a newspaper or waiting up to watch the evening news. I went to USA Today and to CNN. Harried teachers who don't have the time to check the news can do so on the net, and students can use it for reading, research and any other classroom activities which are developed using newspapers. It literally puts newspapers and CNN, with the wealth of information they have to offer, at one's finger tips. In addition, they have easy filters which make finding specific topics of interest a lot faster than checking in an index and then leafing through a newspaper.

Deirdre Kennedy
Anthony D. Perkins Community Center
Boston, MA
June 12, 1996

California Distance Learning Project (CDLP) -- San Francisco CNN Stories for New Readers

http://www.otan.dni.us/cdlp/cdlp.html

This is an informative and fun site. It features a daily CNN news story, followed by a number of activity choices.

There is an immediate, well-designed menu which asks the user to choose the full text, edited text, or an outline. After reading the text, one can select a variety of comprehension and language activities:

vocabulary (definitions)
select a word (finish the sentence)
multiple choice questions
sequencing (events of the story)
conclusions (inference questions)
show and tell *writing a short essay)

(This would be terrific in a multi-level class, allowing different students to work on the same materials, at their own pace, on activities of varying difficulty.)

The story has a few very good graphics (not requiring a long time to download) which really enhance the text. I read Buddhist Temple built in Northern California and got a very good image of the temple.

In addition to the story, there is an informative teacher's page which includes: a rationale for reading articles on screen; the purpose of the story; a description of the story-of-the-week article; curriculum activities; and an invitation to users to post responses online. There are additional sections: Education Archive; CNN's Homepage; a section called "Questions?"; an email address and credits.

Joan Frutkoff
Jewish Vocational Services
Boston, MA
June 5, 1996

Internet Directory

http://novel.nifl.gov/litdir/index.html

Tom Eland's Internet Directory of Literacy and Adult Education Resources is very helpful. I suggest all new Internet users visit this site. I decided to create a web-based learning lesson plan after I visited the Sagrelto's Info Worm. It tells you what the World Wide Web is all about, what a bookmark is, and how you can use it, what's email, what's ERIC, and other useful information. You can learn at your own pace, and you can become familiar with some Cyberspace language.

Heidi Vermeulen
Mujeres Unidas En Accion
Boston, MA

June 28, 1996

Webster's on-line Hypertext Dictionary

http://c.gp.cs.cmu.edu:5103/prog/webster

This site is intriguing because of the detail one can retrieve about the definition of a word. Not only can one receive multiple definitions, but one can also access a thesaurus to scan synonyms. There are examples of correct usage which are helpful to understanding the searched-for word. At first, it seemed to me to be rather difficult to understand the mechanics of how to search for a word, but with practice it got easier. This might prove to be a useful tool in expanding or enhancing vocabulary.

Gloria R Adomkaitis
Boston Public Schools
Boston, MA
June, 1996

ESOL (ESL)

Dave's ESL Cafe (Review 1 of 2)

http://www.eslcafe.com/

Dave's ESL Cafe has some very interesting information for teachers, particularly those who may be searching for ESL positions in other parts of the United States or worldwide.

In addition, this site has a section of ideas other teachers have tried successfully in their classrooms. In the Help Center teachers can receive help from other ESL/EFL teachers worldwide. Areas of assistance include grammar, TOEFL, writing, vocabulary, slang, etc.

There is a One-step ESL Search Page at the ESL Cafe Search whereby one can search the entire Web with search engines such as Yahoo, InfoSeek, Lycos, Web Crawler, AltaVista, Galaxy and others.

The Quiz embodies such areas as current news, geography, grammar, history, idioms, slang words, people, reading comprehension, science, writing, world cultures, American language and culture, and numbers. Each area contains multiple choice questions for students to answer.

Teachers are invited to contribute quizzes to add to those already found at this site.

This site helps students learn what, in a traditional setting, may be dull or boring while, at the same time, it gives them a lot of practice manipulating the mouse and helps them become more comfortable with the computer in general.

Joyce A. Barney
WAITT House
Boston, MA
May, 1996

Dave's ESL Cafe (Review 2 of 2)

http://www.eslcafe.com/

This site is totally impressive. It is extremely well organized, accessible and up-to-date. The graphics were simple, quickly loaded, and fun. I checked into it at 7:30 AM on Saturday, June 6th and it had already been updated to June 6th (and 'Dave' lives on the West Coast!). It is obviously a site that teachers and students visit daily.

I spent a great deal of time at this site because there was so much to see. There were basically seven different categories of information to check into. I checked into them all. Here is a brief description of what I found.

#1. ESL QUIZ PAGE - This page featured numerous quizzes students could take to test their knowledge of: current news, geography, grammar, idioms ("whatchamacallit" and "vege out"), science, world culture, and punctuation. I took a few quizzes and they were fun. Apparently there is a scoring mechanism to tabulate how well you did on the quizzes but it wouldn't work on my computer.

#2. ESL HELP CENTER - This page offered an opportunity for students to ask teachers ESL-related questions. This was a very interesting page to read and it seemed carefully maintained and quickly updated. Students asked some very good questions and various teachers took conscientious stabs at answering the questions or pointing students in directions to find more information.

#3. SEARCH ENGINE PAGE - This page seems to be a place where the search for ESL material, resources, and information is made easy. Yahoo, InfoSeek, Lycos, are presented and those of us who are daunted by the search engine concept are put at ease and given direction.

#4. ESL IDEA PAGE - I wish I had had access to this page when I was learning to teach; I had such a trial-by-fire, isolated, learn-by-doing experience. Yet, at Dave's ESL Cafe I saw that a new teacher who accessed page was able to ask an experienced teacher about teaching methods and approaches. She received a very thoughtful and understanding answer, that was available for all to see, the next day. Cruising this page I spotted extensively detailed ideas on how to teach using charades, circulars, jokes, pen pals and journals.

#5 GRAFFITI WALL - This place was certainly something to see. Largely it seemed to be ESL learners putting their ESL voice on the computer for the first time and asking for a response. Many people were asking for pen pals and were offering their e-mail addresses. I wonder how effective this 'wall' is in setting up consistent pen-pal relationships.

#6. LINKS - This page was very interesting and informative. Mainly it's intention is to link teachers or students to resources which will answer their questions. One LINK informed teachers of articles that were published on 'The Net' that focused on ESL teaching issues. Another LINK pointed teachers toward Job Links Teaching Internationally or the ESL JOB CENTER for local teaching opportunities.

#7. CONNECTION - This category provided e-mail access, message exchanges, and a chance for students to communicate in 'real time.' It was the area where I spent the least amount of time but which seemed to have the most possibilities in terms of communication.

As I mentioned before Dave's ESL Cafe is a very impressive site. It seems to be given a great deal of attention both by those who monitor it and by those who visit it. To me, it truly represents the wonderful potential of using the Internet for ESL teachers and students. It receives my highest recommendation for a visit.

Julie McConville
International Institute of Boston
Boston, MA
June 7, 1996

The Email Project
Formerly, The California Email Project

http://www.otan.dni.us/webfarm/emailproject/email.htm

Of all the sites I explored this was the most interesting. It was easy to access and the directions were quite simple. Perfect for a novice user!

On this site there were many interesting topics: Learners' Stories, where one can read stories written by students in adult education programs. Especially interesting were the Burmese Water Festival and Supermarket Day. Immigration Stories was equally interesting to read and would provide great topics for classroom discussion.

There is also the Pizza Home Page wherein students can create their own "project" and enter it on the site.

The Annotated Book Lists page looked very promising. The goal of this section is to have parents list books that they have enjoyed reading to or with their children so that others could benefit from their experience. In family literacy programs which encourage the reading connection, this would be a wonderful asset.

There also appeared to be a section on Health Education which you could research using Yahoo. This site deserves in-depth investigation.

Gloria R Adomkaitis
Boston Public Schools
Boston, MA
June, 1996

ex-CHANGE
(Electronic, Xross Cultural, Hypertextual Academy of Non-native Gatherings in English)
(Review 1 of 3)

http://deil.lang.uiuc.edu/exchange/

This site gives second language students the opportunity to express themselves using the English language in a variety of ways.

It has been my experience that one of the most serious difficulties for ESOL students to overcome is that of adjusting to a different culture. In many, if not all cases, it is even more difficult than having to learn a new language. Cultural differences are dealt with in a unique and interesting manner in this site.

Students gain knowledge and insight about different cultures and can read writings of non-native English speakers from all over the world. They can access world news and events and read online newspapers.

A variety of English self-study materials are available for their use as well whereby they can learn about such diverse subjects as schooling options in the United States, renting apartments, shopping in the U.S., using the library and going to parties.

The self-study materials include reading selections and comprehension questions. It is an interesting way to learn both the language and the culture into which they are becoming immersed.

Joyce A. Barney
WAITT House
Boston, MA
May, 1996

ex-CHANGE
(Electronic, Xross Cultural, Hypertextual Academy of Non-native Gatherings in English)
(Review 2 of 3)

http://deil.lang.uiuc.edu/exchange/

You will find short stories, poetry and other creative writing from ESOL students. I personally loved "Stuck Between Two Mundos." I was not impressed with "What ifs." There is something for everybody in this site. For animal rights activists, read "Gombei, A Wild Duck Hunter, and the Wild Ducks." If you like to "travel and see" this section is definitely for you. I learned about Javanese culture, wedding rituals, and I even learned some new geography tips. Through the eyes of the ESOL student I was able to picture Indonesia. I can tell you one thing, one day I am going to Indonesia!

Even though I tried many times, I had trouble accessing some links: "Feature articles," "Headline News, " "Politics" and "Sports." I spent an about an hour looking at this site. This is my favorite.

Heide Vermeulen
Mujeres Unidas En Accion
Boston, MA
June 28, 1996

ex-CHANGE
(Electronic, Xross Cultural, Hypertextual Academy of Non-native Gatherings in English)
(Review 3 of 3)

http://deil.lang.uiuc.edu/exchange/

Exchange publishes stories written by ESOL students from all over the world. I clicked world cultures and found some interesting real life situations in which ESOL folk often find themselves. From the list given, I chose tax mishap and found a wonderful story by a woman from Colombia who discovered that in the US, the tax is not included in the price in restaurants. The story could be used as a conversation starter for your ESOL class. I'm sure that your students could add many other mishaps, as well as other shared experiences, to this site.

Ellen Dabrieo, SND
Notre Dame Education Center
South Boston, Massachusetts
June, 1996

Fluency Through Fables

http://www.comenius.com/fable/index.html

Fluency through fables. Each month the Comenius Group provides a fable and various exercises for ESOL students. If your students are intermediate and above, this would be a good place for them to visit. There is a fable written out and then some exercises for the student to follow through. The Exercises are as follows: Vocabulary Matching, True and False Comprehension, Vocabulary Completion and Written Discussion. The exercises are good. (I had a little trouble figuring out the directions to choose the correct answers, so be sure to do it yourself first!). Even for beginning students, this could be a good conversation starter since the fable is simply written. There are exercises that accompany the fable: Vocabulary Matching, True and False Comprehension, Vocabulary Completion and Written Discussion. These can be printed off-line and used as written exercises.

Ellen Dabrieo, SND
Notre Dame Education Center
South Boston, Massachusetts
June, 1996

Frizzy University Network (FUN) (Review 1 of 3)

http://thecity.sfsu.edu/~funweb/Welcome.html

There are so many sites within this one site that it is hard to explain. It has been set up to help ESOL students improve their writing skills, but there is so much more to learn here. Students who travel through this "campus" will find ways to improve their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. There are many "exits" at this site that will link you and your students to other sites. If you have time and truly want to "browse", this is a good place to do it. You can explore and learn at Frizzy University.

I "entered" the Fun 202 Course and looked at the assignments. It was a good exercise in writing for advanced students. Surely this site is a good resource for teachers.

Ellen Dabrieo, SND
Notre Dame Education Center
South Boston, Massachusetts
June, 1996

Frizzy University Network (FUN) (Review 2 of 3)

http://thecity.sfsu.edu/~funweb/Welcome.html

I was really curious to find out about Frizzy's hair, but I never got to see a picture or anything that would give me any indication. I do, however, know that her real name is Karla L. Frizler. I think that "Frizzy" is her nickname. On this site ESOL teachers can find new resources and tools to be used in class. Students can use it to read materials written by other ESOL students. This page has recipes, postcards, etc.

I liked the art section. I found electronic postcards from Paul Gauguin's paintings. They showed women of Tahiti doing differently daily life activities, very beautiful and rich in color.

I also visited the Wings Electronic Magazine. Although I found it very interesting, this site would be for ESOL advanced students who are also intermediate Internet users. You can also get handouts, like the "Unofficial Intensive English Program Mini Course," which outlines the different stages of the program and how to apply it. There are also many links to other educational web sites.

Heide Vermeulen
Mujeres Unidas En Accion
Boston, MA
June 28, 1996

Frizzy University Network (FUN) (Review 3 of 3)

http://thecity.sfsu.edu/~funweb/Welcome.html

This site attempts to help ESOL students improve their writing. Students share their ideas, opinions and feelings in written English. It provides tips for anyone interested in creating his or her own homepage. It contains grammar workshops designed for ESOL students. It also has student-generated web pages including "WINGS," a monthly electronic magazine that features student writing, art and movie reviews. The student magazine is uncensored and does contain a large amount of profanity.

Margaret McPartland
Jackson/Mann Community Center and
RCC Prep
Boston, MA
June 6, 1996

LEO (Learning English On the WWW) Lab

http://www.aec.ukans.edu/leo/English.html

Under the heading "Culture" click on "Holidays" and you'll be able to choose from Halloween, Thanksgiving, Ground Hog Day, Christmas, Martin Luther King's Birthday, Valentine's Day, Easter, Memorial Day and other holidays. After choosing "Thanksgiving" I had another 20 or so choices including programs, parades, football, several historically-related topics, recipes, arts, turkey tips, wishbone etiquette, poetry, and a puzzle which produced an intermediate level word search.

Michele A. Weaver
Vietnamese-American Civic Assn.
Boston, MA
June, 1996

OPPortunities in ESL...Theme-Based Pages

http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~leslieob/themes.html

OPPortunities in ESL...Theme-Based Pages is a collection of resources on contemporary and historical issues to be used in ESOL classes. By using the table of contents, teachers can select issues or topics of interest to them and their students (e.g. abortion, gun control, affirmative action, or the Holocaust) and find readings and other materials to use in classes. The information on these pages is linked to a wide variety of other Web sites. Of particular interest is the way the authors have gathered resources from contrasting perspectives on issues such as gun control and abortion; this will be useful in developing students' critical reading and thinking skills.

One problem with the site is that it is not always clear who has authored the material (and whether you are still on this site or have moved to another one) and to what extent the authors have actually used these materials with students and are recommending them. The site would be very useful, though, as a starting point for teachers who are developing theme-based curricula with their students.

Alice Levine
Boston, MA
October 4, 1997

Visalia Adult School

http://www.otan.dni.us/cdlp/visalia/home.htm

The Visalia Adult School, in Visalia, California, "Where Learning Never Ends." Since I like reading about other people's experiences, cultures, and stories, I enjoyed this site. Cheng's story is very sad, yet he doesn't sound bitter at all. He sounds like a very loving and caring person. It must have been very hard for a six year old to lose his mother. I think ESOL students could use his story to compare with their own experiences and use it to practice conversation. I was drawn to his story and think almost anyone would be. I hope one day Cheng can return to his family's farm in Laos, if that's what he would like. He is an excellent artist.

Heide Vermeulen
Mujeres Unidas En Accion
Boston, MA
June 28, 1996

Weekly Idiom Index

http://www.comenius.com/idiom/complete.html

The Weekly Idiom Index, when I checked in in June, 1996, included 47 common idioms, such as "in the red," "beat around the bush," and "pulling (someone's) leg." A feedback form is included for making suggestions or to receive more information. Each week, one person who completes this form receives a free membership in something called the "e-mail Key Pal Connection."

Richard Goldberg
Asian American Civic Association
Boston, MA
June 1, 1996

For more ESL/ESOL Website Reviews you may wish to look at reviews done in October, 1997 by University of California /Fullterton graduate ESL students
http://hss.fullerton.edu/sgaer/student.html

Adult Secondary Education (GED/EDP)

CollegeNet

http://www.Collegenet.com/new/

For my GED students, many of whom hope to go to college, looking at the sample data at this site would be informative. Interested students could practice filling out the application to get an idea of the kinds of information they might be asked to provide.

I found the application process frustrating because there seems to be no way (at least apparent to me) to move through the form quickly. One is forced to go through every blank line in order to reach the next section.

Cara Streck
Project Hope
Boston, Mass.
June 4, 1996

Project-based Learning

Inquiry Maps (Review 1 of 2)

http://www2.wgbh.org/mbcweis/ltc/alri/I.M.html

I found this site quite interesting. It begins with some conversation about Project-based Learning, Inquiry Maps and the Internet. This conversation is followed by two articles by David Rosen, which are based on excerpts from the conversation. Rosen explains very clearly what project-based learning and inquiry maps are and how to use them in the classroom. He uses good examples from student experiences and shows how to expand upon them. There are links to more information about this topic.

Ellen Dabrieo, SND
Notre Dame Education Center
South Boston, Massachusetts
June, 1996

Inquiry Maps (Review 2 of 2)

http://www2.wgbh.org/mbcweis/ltc/alri/I.M.html

This site explains what an inquiry map is and how it functions. It is based completely on participatory learning.

First, the group chooses a topic. The participants generate questions which are both real and important. Then, they identify and choose the methods of inquiry they will use in the project.

Some of the methods of inquiry are interviewing in person and by telephone; documenting personal experience; conducting surveys; observing and recording information in a systematic manner; experimentation; library research, including the use of reference books; doing research with databases on the Web; and posting questions to Net user groups or listservs.

After completing the preceding steps, the participants plan and carry out their research. They present their findings, usually in prose, but sometimes in a chart, graph, photos, or other media.

Other participants read and critique their findings. The process can be repeated based on new or existing questions.

This site can be quite helpful to educators who want to implement participatory learning in their classes. The explanations are very clear and explicit.

It seems to be the type of project which needs very little teacher motivation, since it requires so much student involvement. The students should love it.

Joyce A. Barney
WAITT House
Boston, MA
May 1996

Nutrition Inquiry Map

http://www2.wgbh.org/mbcweis/ltc/sccc/Nutrlmap/example.html

The information for this Inquiry Map on nutrition was provided by the Health Action Team at SCALE in Somerville, Massachusetts. Nutrition was one of the health issues the team of four ESOL students and one teacher decided to investigate.

The I-Map starts with a series of questions which you can click on to explore further. The response to the question "What are some foods to limit in a diet?", for example, lists several substances including fat, salt, sugar and alcohol, and explains why they can be dangerous in excess.

Other questions such as "What vitamins does the body need?" and "What are the necessary nutrients?" have equally well-organized answers.

Janet Nicholas
Boston Community Centers
Boston, MA
June, 1996

Immigration Inquiry Map

http://www2.wgbh.org/mbcweis/immigrantmap.html

This site presents a student-generated project done by the UMass Medical Center ESOL class It includes a survey for recent immigrants, as well as answers to some of the questions acquired through student research. Because it is student-centered, it is a wonderful place to go to elicit students' thoughts and opinions on immigration. Some sample questions include:

1. What is the Simpson Bill?

2. What are the main reasons people immigrate here?

3. How many people immigrate to the U.S. each year and what countries do they come from?

4. What is the biggest problem for second generation immigrants?

5. What do American citizens think about immigrants?

Students using this site are not only encouraged to explore the survey questions and research presented here, but to add any new questions, responses, or insights they may have. I am looking forward to using this site as an initial way in to talking about immigration with my beginning level ABE students and to eventually having them follow up with their own research.

Wendy Hagan
Asian American Civic Association
Boston , MA
October 4, 1997

Adult Education Research

How Easy Is It for Adult Educators to Use the Information Superhighway?

http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI/Cruising.html

This is a study of how adult literacy practitioners are using the Internet. It offers support for those educators who might be fearful of using the Internet, or even of using computers in general.

This site gives an idea of how many teachers are using the Internet and what percentages use it in various ways.

In this site, educators can find ideas on overcoming obstacles such as finding a mentor, joining special interest groups, learning with others or participating in online chats.

Respondents have indicated that they are using the Internet for a variety of adult education activities such as e-mail exchanges with colleagues; using listservs or message forums; participating in newsgroups to get and share information; searching databases for information; uploading and downloading files; research; working on projects with colleagues; reading online magazines or journals; reviewing teacher-made curricula or lesson plans; helping students do electronic pen-pal-ing; job searching; searching online news databases (e.g. UP, AP, Reuters, etc.) for adult education-related information.

Any adult educator who has doubts about the usefulness of the Internet in the learning process or for professional development would do well to search this site.

Joyce A. Barney
WAITT House
Boston, MA
May, 1996

Grants Information

Center for Urban Development and Empowerment (CURE) Florida Atlantic University

http://www.fau.edu/divdept/cupa/cure/cure.htm

CURE's Web site aims to help those who are serving the needs of low-income minority people specifically. It provides invaluable resources to grant writers and useful information about Higher Education, Immigration, U.S. Economy, Urban Affairs, Non-Profit Organizations and Census Population, and other data sets.

Grants Central Station

http://www.fau.edu/grants.central.station/

This is a special service of the CURE to grant writers and want-to-be grant writers who work to improve the services for inner city youth, elderly, and minority communities and for low-income people in general. As indicated by its name, Grants Central Station puts together almost all the tools and resources you will need to learn about grants writing, accomplish needs analyses, and search for corporate, foundation and federal funds. Check it out! It's amazing.

Other Web-based Resources found, but not reviewed:

Non-profit Resources Catalogue

http://www.clark.net/pub/pwalker/

The Foundation Center

http://fdncenter.org/

Corporate Funding - Academic Innovations

http://www.academicinnovations.com/corpfun.html#ad

Matchmaker

http://www.singerfoundation.org/archives/matchmkr/matchmkr.htm

National Guide to Funding for Community Development

http://fdncenter.org/book/comdev.html

Annie Chin
Asian American Civic Association
Boston, MA
June 10, 1996

Other Interesting Sites

The Whitehouse

http://www.whitehouse.gov

This site was fascinating. It allows you to check on the President's daily press releases and see what is of current interest and what the President's position is on that topic. It also gives you background information about the President, Vice President, their families, the Whitehouse and past presidents. There is a photo library so that a picture can be put with a President or a specific event. I think that the photo library is a great resource. In addition, this site gives you easy access into more detailed information about the different branches of government, as well as specific government departments. There is also an educational feature geared specifically to children. Having parents and children visit this section together would make a great family literacy activity.

Deirdre Kennedy
Anthony D. Perkins Community Center
Boston, Mass.
June 12, 1996

Multicultural Home Page

http://pasture.ecn.purdue.edu/~agenhtml/agenmc/index.html/#003

This page features the arts and cultures of countries around the globe. Countries are listed alphabetically under five continents: Africa (Senegal), America (Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Haiti, Puerto Rico), Asia &Pacific Islands (China, India, Korea, Philippines), Europe (France), and the Mid-East (Israel.) This homepage is very much a work in progress. Although there are only eleven country sites up (as of 6/10/96) -- and two of these are under construction --those that are already up offer a wealth of information and a feast for the eyes and ears (if you have the right audio software.)

For example, within the Art of China Homepage, you can sample the richness of China's art from different periods and experience the movement and spirit of Chinese characters written in different calligraphy styles. You can also enjoy listening to selected Chinese classical music and songs or seeing spectacular scenery from different regions of the country. You can try out the tutorial of survival Chinese in Mandarin or recipes for popular Chinese dishes. For those interested in the Chinese Zodiac and the science of Feng Shiu, links to the Asian Astrology Homepage are also provided.

This site can provide lots of fun as well as intercultural sharing and learning for everyone.

Annie Chin
Asian American Civic Association
Boston, MA
June 10, 1996

Lemonade Stand

http://www.littlejason.com/lemonade/index.html

Lemonade stand is a well-known math game where a player combines simple financial strategy, and hopes for good weather, to make money selling lemonade. The rules are quite simple and the color graphics are terrific. You begin with $5.00 and a rent cost of $.75. You set the price of your lemonade and how many cups you will make that day after checking the weather forecast. On my first day of sales it rained and I only made a $2.50 profit. However, I learned from my mistakes and was much more successful on the next day. I returned from the lemonade business after three days of work with a $14.95 profit.

This site is really well worth a visit and seems to be a creative way to teach a variety of math concepts.

Julie McConville
International Institute of Boston
Boston, MA
June 7, 1996

Internet Roadmap

http://www.brandonu.ca/~ennsnr/Resources/Roadmap/

I became addicted to Patrick Crispen's Internet Roadmap , an "easy to follow and fun Internet tutorial series." It allowed me to copy reams of information about such topics as e-mail and listservs. The information is written for beginners, so nothing about it is overwhelming. Also, this site contains a list of books which are directed towards any need a beginner might encounter. All in all, a good site to check out.

John Avellar
East Boston/Harborside Community Center
June, 1996

Last Updated October 25, 1997 by David J. Rosen DJRosen@world.std.com

Professional Purposes for Using the Internet

From: "How Adult Literacy Practitioners Are Using the Internet"
David J. Rosen. Ed.D.
September, 1996

[http://www2.wgbh.org/MBCWEIS/LTC/ALRI.teacherfocusgroups.html]

1) Online instruction/learning/skills improvement

- Students using the Internet for distance learning.
- Students use the Internet for reading and writing skills improvement through email and real-time chats
- Matching students with "Key pals" to help them improve reading and writing skills
- Project-based learning (pen-pals, Internet projects, publishing) "hoping to put this in the classroom"
- Creating multimedia programs and putting them up on a server
- Math teaching applications
- Using the Web with ESOL students (E-zines, newspapers, online cultural sites such as Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian, etc.)

2) A source for classroom ideas and materials

3) Communication with colleagues through email and listservs

- Email within one's work organization
- Being able to reach other teachers (if they regularly read their email -- through asynchronous communication -- to share important recent information about students who they both teach)
- Get up-to-date public policy information from a state or national listserv and discuss it with other colleagues
- To enable project directors or program coordinators to stay in touch with each other·listservs -- for collegial sharing among adult educators (e.g. math listservs, ESOL listservs, etc.)·information from the state D.O.E. by email

4) Research/getting information

- Downloading international news summaries
- Staying up on national public policy (using NLA listserv) and distributing this information to other teachers, supervisors

5) Professional development

- Taking online classes
- Exchanging lesson modules

6) Marketing,and publishing/disseminating

7) Other purposes

- Introducing students to the Internet ("We owe it to our students to teach them this.)
- Searching for information on grants
- A way to help students (and help oneself, as a teacher) to knock down barriers to learning

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